

Motorcycle

RIDE 'EM, DON'T HIDE 'EM

CLASSICS

January/February 2019

BARELY LEGAL

FROM THE TRACK TO THE STREET:
HONDA'S RACE-INSPIRED
VFR750R/RC30



PLUS:

- BIG SID'S SINGLE: 1950 VINCENT SERIES B METEOR
- FIRST RIDE: 2019 ROYAL ENFIELD 650 TWINS
- MISSED OPPORTUNITY: 1965 DUCATI 125cc FOUR
- LOWBOY: NORTON'S ONE-OFF 1960 350cc CHOPPED RACER

\$6.99 • Vol. 14 No. 3 • Display Until Feb. 18

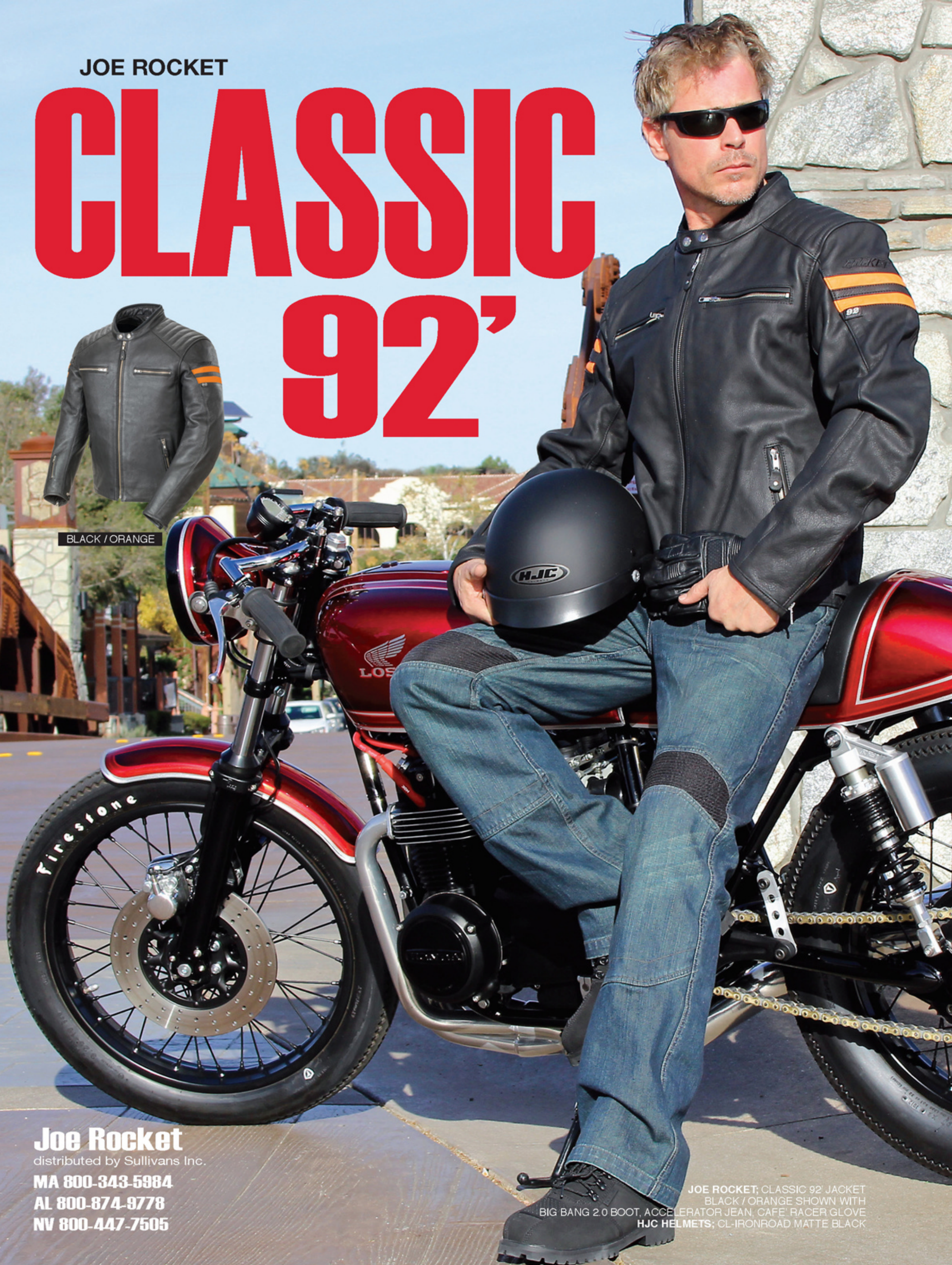


JOE ROCKET

CLASSIC 92'



BLACK / ORANGE



Joe Rocket

distributed by Sullivans Inc.

MA 800-343-5984

AL 800-874-9778

NV 800-447-7505

JOE ROCKET; CLASSIC 92' JACKET
BLACK / ORANGE SHOWN WITH
BIG BANG 2.0 BOOT, ACCELERATOR JEAN, CAFE' RACER GLOVE
HJC HELMETS; CL-IRONROAD MATTE BLACK



BROWN / WHITE



BROWN / ORANGE



BLACK / WHITE

FEATURING

YKK®

Cowhide

CLASSIC STYLING - RELAXED FIT;

PREMIUM 1.2MM UNCORRECTED
HAND PICKED COWHIDE

OTHER RIDE SPECIFIC FEATURES;

- TOP STITCHED 1.0 TO 1.2MM DRUM DYED COWHIDE, SPECIFICALLY TAILORED FOR A RELAXED FIT
- POCKETS FOR OPTIONAL ARMOR AT THE SHOULDERS, ELBOWS & BACK
- ZIP-IN QUILTED FULL SLEEVE LINER
 - 2 INSIDE UTILITY POCKETS, 4 OUTSIDE POCKETS
- ADJUSTABLE NEOPRENE-LINED MANDARIN COLLAR
- ADJUSTABLE WAIST AND CUFFS
- 1.5" STORM FLAP AT MAIN ZIPPER
- YKK ZIPPERS THROUGH-OUT
- SUBTLE TONE ON TONE BADGING



ZIP-IN QUILTED FULL SLEEVE LINER



BACK VIEW

BLACK / WHITE
AVAILABLE IN SIZES; SM TO 3XL
BROWN / CREAM, BLACK / ORANGE, BROWN / ORANGE
AVAILABLE IN SIZES; SM TO 2XL

MSRP STARTING @

\$319.99

Corey Levenson shares his story of acquiring and riding "Big Sid" Biberman's 1950 Vincent Series B Meteor. Page 18.



COREY LEVENSON

FEATURES

- 12 HOT WHEELS: HONDA VFR750R/RC30**
Honda engineers started with a race bike and developed it into the street-legal RC30.
- 18 UNIQUE VINCENT: BIG SID'S METEOR**
Sid's smallest Vincent is back on the road.
- 24 2018 BARBER VINTAGE FESTIVAL**
Colin Seeley and British triples made our day.
- 30 MEMORY MAKER: HONDA CL350**
Reviving a low-mile, original 1968 350 twin.
- 36 DUCATI 125GP FOUR**
A piece of history, now in the Morbidelli museum.
- 42 BOAT CROSS: BIKES IN A BOAT**
Two friends, two small bikes and a trail on the other side of a lake. Enter the boat pickup!
- 48 2018 HARVEST CLASSIC**
Bikes, barbecue and bands in the Texas Hill Country.
- 50 ROYAL ENFIELD'S NEW TWINS**
The new Continental GT650 and INT650 debut.
- 59 KATANA KOLLECTION**
The most important Katanas ever, under one roof.
- 64 NORTON LOWBOY RACER**
Pushing aerodynamic design in search of speed.
- 71 THE TWO-WHEELED CAR**
The Maico Mobil MB200 is regarded by some enthusiasts as the ultimate scooter.
- 76 TWALD 2018: WE WENT ANYWAY**
Despite flooding, riders made the trek to Wisconsin's Driftless region for riding and mayhem.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 BLACK SIDE DOWN**
The editor speaks.
- 6 READERS AND RIDERS**
Remembering Yamaha's RD400 and looking back at a special Marusho 500.
- 8 ON THE RADAR**
1980-1986 BMW R80 G/S, plus the later R100GS and R1100GS.
- 10 SIDECAR**
2019 Las Vegas auctions, Rollie Free, and around the world with Elspeth Beard.
- 78 TEST RIDE**
We test three aftermarket shocks on a BMW K75.
- 82 DESTINATIONS**
Visit Sandy Hook, the Atlantic Highlands, and the Gateway National Recreation Area.
- 84 KEITH'S GARAGE**
Keith's fixes will keep your vintage bike up and running.
- 86 COOL FINDS**
New stuff for old bikes.
- 96 PARTING SHOTS**
David Aldana earned the nickname "Rubber Ball" for walking away from many crashes during his career.

ON THE WEB!

How to set sag

Considered something of a dark art by riders unfamiliar with the task, setting your bike's suspension sag — the difference between its laden and unladen height — is easier than you might think, and doesn't require much more than a tape measure and a helping hand — and a little time. Better yet, the time spent will return the favor with a bike that rides better and with more control — and the bonus of understanding how to get the most from your bike's suspension. Learn more by going to MotorcycleClassics.com/sag



CONSIGN OR REGISTER TO BID

28TH ANNUAL VINTAGE & ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLE AUCTION

LAS VEGAS

JANUARY 22-27 • 1,750 MOTORCYCLES

SOUTH POINT HOTEL & CASINO • LAS VEGAS, NV

1939 VELOCETTE ROARER

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SELLER OF ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLES



MECUM
AUCTIONS

PRESENTED BY  **State Farm**

THE EXPERIENCE BEGINS AT MECUM.COM

Coming of age

Japanese bikes from the early 1980s have been slow to be appreciated by "traditional" collectors, seeming to be generally ignored, and rarely perceived as desirable or collectible in any way. That's something of a mystery to me, because while I understand the aesthetic allure of vintage Brit bikes and early American iron, the Japanese onslaught of the early '80s represents a unique era in motorcycle history.

In the 1950s and '60s, bikes poured out of Britain, Italy, Germany, Spain and Japan in a wave of new offerings from upstart companies. The proliferation of manufacturers and models built to something of a crescendo in the 1960s, creating a market literally flooded with choice.

The market was shifting by the 1970s, as smaller manufacturers dropped off the radar, and by the 1980s, a quiet but steady consolidation already in motion hit full stride as motorcycle manufacturing turned into a game played by a few. A struggling Harley-Davidson, the U.S.'s sole manufacturer, defined the U.S. market. In England, Triumph was still — barely — in production, and in Japan, once home to a dizzying number of small manufacturers, it was the Big Four: Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha. In Italy, a hotbed of manufacturing from the '50s to the '70s, small concerns like Laverda and others were either withering on the vine or had gone completely to seed. Ducati was hanging on, but the landscape was hardly rich. In Germany, formerly home to giants like Adler, Puch and Zündapp, the market was dominated by BMW.

Yet at the same time that the number of manufacturers was shrinking, unique market forces created a proliferation of new single, twin and multi-cylinder bikes from Japan. In 1981, Yamaha kicked off the so-called Honda-Yamaha War when it opened a new factory to challenge Honda as the world's largest motorcycle manufacturer. At the start of their battle for supremacy, Yamaha and Honda each had a 60-model global lineup. Eighteen months later Honda, its R&D and manufacturing capacity far greater than Yamaha's thanks to a push into automobile production, had introduced 113 new or revamped models. Yamaha couldn't come close, introducing 37 new or revamped models in the same period, and Yamaha's ill-considered quest for dominance almost crippled the company; it's been reported that by 1984, Yamaha had more than 12 months of inventory in dealer showrooms.

Thirty-five-plus years later, bikes from the model boom of the early '80s are increasingly influencing the vintage bike market, presenting some interesting challenges for "classic" bike enthusiasts who don't accept them as worthy of the title. Certainly, there were more than a few bikes from that epoch that were, to be kind, fairly awful.

Technically proficient, they were often lacking in personality, a complaint regularly levied against Japanese bikes. With some exception, they were in most ways simply consumer items designed to be bought, used and then cast aside to make room for the next great thing from Japan Inc. As such, they rarely engendered the kind of loyal and enthusiastic following that bikes from companies like Harley in the U.S. and Triumph and Norton in the U.K. did.

Yet early '80s Japanese bikes have their supporters, driven by a combination of memory (read: demographics) and affordability. In an age where Norton 850 Commandos command \$8,000-plus, '80s bikes from Japan represent vintage-hued riding at a reasonable price, and for that reason alone should be appreciated. More importantly, however, they should be appreciated for what they represent as reminders of a unique era in motorcycle history.

Richard Backus
Editor-in-chief



Motorcycle
CLASSICS

RICHARD BACKUS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
rbackus@motorcycleclassics.com

LONDON HALL, MANAGING EDITOR
lhall@motorcycleclassics.com

ARTHUR HUR, ASSOCIATE EDITOR/ONLINE

CONTRIBUTORS

PHIL AYNLEY • JEFF BARGER • JOE BERK • BOB BURNS
ALAN CATHCART • NICK CEDAR • HAMISH COOPER
KEL EDGE • SETH DeDOES • KEITH FELLESTEIN
DAIN GINGERELLI • COREY LEVENSON • BUD MCINTIRE
DREW SHIPLEY • MARGIE SIEGAL • ROBERT SMITH
JOHN L. STEIN • ANDY WESTLAKE

ART DIRECTION AND PREPRESS

MATTHEW T. STALLBAUMER, ASST. GROUP ART DIRECTOR
TERRY PRICE, PREPRESS

CONVERGENT MEDIA

BRENDA ESCALANTE; bescalante@ogdenpubs.com

WEB AND DIGITAL CONTENT

KRISTIN DEAN, DIGITAL STRATEGY
TONYA OLSON, WEB CONTENT MANAGER

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

(800) 678-5779; adinfo@ogdenpubs.com

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

(866) 848-5346; classifieds@motorcycleclassics.com

NEWSSTAND

MELISSA GEIKEN, (785) 274-4344

CUSTOMER CARE

(800) 880-7567



BILL UHLER, PUBLISHER

OSCAR H. WILL III, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

CHERYLYN OLMSTED,
CIRCULATION & MARKETING DIRECTOR

BOB CUCCINIELLO,
NEWSSTAND & PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

BOB LEGAULT, SALES DIRECTOR

CAROLYN LANG, GROUP ART DIRECTOR

ANDREW PERKINS

DIRECTOR OF EVENTS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

KRISTIN DEAN, DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL STRATEGY

TIM SWIETEK, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR

ROSS HAMMOND, FINANCE & ACCOUNTING DIRECTOR

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS (ISSN 1556-0880)

January/February 2019, Volume 14 Issue 3

is published bimonthly by Ogden Publications, Inc.,
1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609-1265.

Periodicals Postage Paid at Topeka, KS and additional
mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Ogden Publications, Inc., 1503 SW 42nd St.,
Topeka, KS 66609-1265.

For subscription inquiries call: (800) 880-7567

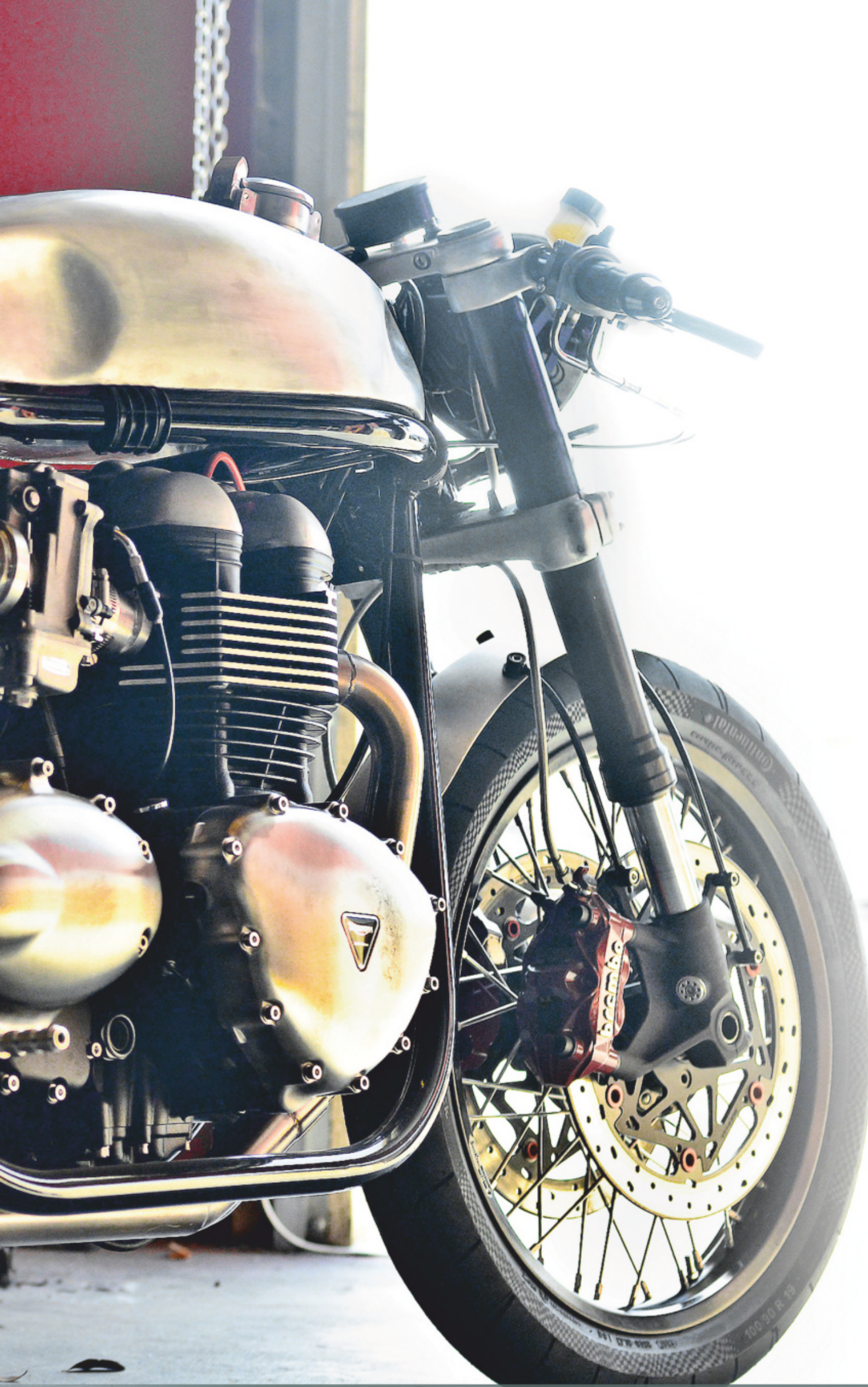
Outside the U.S. and Canada:

Phone (785) 274-4360 • Fax (785) 274-4305

Subscribers: If the Post Office alerts us that your
magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation
unless we receive a corrected address within two years.

©2018 Ogden Publications Inc. Printed in the U.S.A.





YOUR VISION

OUR PARTS



MIKES XS
VINTAGE YAMAHA PARTS

Z1 ENTERPRISES
VINTAGE JAPANESE PARTS

Randakk's
Cycle Shack
VINTAGE HONDA PARTS

DIMECITYCYCLES.COM | MIKESXS.NET | Z1ENTERPRISES.COM | RANDAKKS.COM

“Hard to believe I survived, but here I am.”

Yamaha fan

Thanks for the great article on the RD400 (November/December 2018). All true! Here's mine, a 1977 original, with only 1,600 miles on it. It is nearly perfect, and I even have the original battery (dry), which has never been charged. I spent more time with the RZ variants, and my son raced to an amateur national championship in 1994 on our 75 horsepower rocket! Long live 2-strokes!

Gordon King/Folly Beach, South Carolina



What horn?

I just finished reading *The Duke of Oil* about the RD400C. As a Yamaha mechanic/owner/racer throughout the mid-1970s, I rode a lot of RDs. I wholeheartedly agree with the horn assessment. Being young and even dumber than I am now, I never even thought about putting a louder horn on an RD. My technique for alerting errant drivers was a quick stab at the rear brake, which produced a short but loud tire squeal that got *everyone's* attention. Hard to believe I survived, but here I am.

Mark Gardner/Bisbee, Arizona

BSA rider

Motorcycle Classics is a good magazine. I am 68, so it's a little heavy on Japanese bikes for my taste, but I guess that's how the demographic cookie crumbles. I would like to see more real-life adventures on old (pre-Sixties) machines, and more tech stuff on upgrading old bikes. I have a 1955 BSA Golden Flash in France and have done over 16,000 kilometers around Europe under all conditions and unaccompanied, without any serious problems.

Phillip White/via email

Royal Enfield/Indian

I enjoyed Robert Smith's feature on Tony Cording's 1959 Royal Enfield Constellation. I'm a Royal Enfield enthusiast, and I can't figure out why Triumph and BSA sold thousands of big twins a year in the late-1950s and early-1960s and Royal Enfield sold a couple hundred. I have one correction though on the sidebar about Indian Enfields sold in the U.S.A. There is a reference to the accompanying 1958 *Cycle* ad as an Indian Apache Constellation. The bike in the ad is an Indian Trailblazer with the bigger rims and big valenced fenders. The Apache indeed had a Constellation 700cc engine, but had chrome fenders. And its distinguishing mark was its rear fender that was mounted to the swingarm and hugged the tire like a front fender.

Greg Lawless/Summit, Wisconsin

Greg,

Thanks for putting the record straight. We clearly misinterpreted some of the detail differences between the two. Interesting to think that RE was ahead of the hugger fender fad! — Ed.



Marusho memories

This photo shows my uncle posing on his Marusho 500 Magnum boxer twin with his girlfriend (now wife) in April 1969. He rode, fixed and owned many different bikes including Triumph, BSA, Ducati, Harley-Davidson Hummer and others in his younger life, but I think this was certainly the rarest bike he ever owned. He did not put many miles on it and eventually sold it to an older gentleman in the early 1970s. I was in my early teens and recall sitting on it in his garage, imagining what it would be like to ride it. It really was beautiful, and it was one of many bikes that fueled my desire to own a bike someday. He told me that only about 600 of these were imported to the U.S. He bought it from a local Honda dealer who was thinking about adding the Marusho line to his store. I do not know how many he sold, but when my uncle bought it, he included all of the special factory tools with the sale!

In 1971 I was 15 years old and had money burning a hole in my pocket for a new Honda CB100. My dad said that as soon as I earned a driver's license, he would allow me to buy a bike as long as I could afford it. My uncle offered the Marusho to me for \$550. A dream come true! Unfortunately, I turned it down on my dad's advice because, after all, where would I get parts and service for this now orphaned brand of bike? I ended up buying a brand-new CB125 for the same price. I often wonder, what if I had bought it and kept it? I am now retired and going on 62 and ride a 1972 Honda CB750 and a 2005 Harley-Davidson Electra Glide Ultra.

Denis Matuszak/Menasha, Wisconsin



CROWNED QUEEN OF COMBUSTION

Rulers of the world of motorcycle insurance - with annual policies starting at \$75.

PROGRESSIVE.COM

PROGRESSIVE

1-800-PROGRESSIVE

Progressive Casualty Ins. Co. & affiliates. \$75 per year premium excludes state fees and taxes, and is not available in AK, GA, HI, MA, & SC.

A Bigger Berm Basher: 1980-1986 BMW R80 G/S

"The real difficulty in changing the course of any enterprise lies not in developing new ideas, but in escaping from old ones," wrote economist John Maynard Keynes.

It was BMW that escaped from the "old" idea that dual-sport motorcycles should be dirt-bike based — which explains why many of today's two-wheeled SUVs are really street bikes gone rogue rather than super-sized scramblers in civvies. And the granddaddy of heavy-duty dual sports was BMW's own R80 G/S.

BMW had no dirt bikes in its portfolio, so in creating a dual-sport motorcycle it was logical for them to start with a street machine. In doing so, they created the now vast market for adventure motorcycles and inspired imitators from almost every bike brand.

The starting point for the G/S was the engine and main chassis from the R80/7 of 1978. The 50 horsepower air-cooled flat twin was treated to a slimming program with new Nikasil-plated light-alloy cylinders, and almost 10 pounds trimmed from the flywheel. The rear subframe was new, with a single spring/shock controlling a single-sided swingarm (called Monolever), which also housed the final drive shaft. There was no rear axle; the spoked rear wheel was secured to the hub by three bolts, automotive style.

At the front, the G/S used the /7's 28-degree steering angle, but with a longer fork giving 6 inches of travel hitched to a 21-inch spoked front wheel. Metzeler Enduro tires made especially for the G/S introduced the now-familiar "trail" tread pattern in 4 x 18-inch rear and 3 x 21-inch front. Brakes were a single-leading-shoe drum at the rear, and a single disc at the front.

Did it work? That depends who was asked. The "adventure"

bike concept was so new that many reviewers missed the point. "I don't know of anyone who's looking for a 400-pound, \$5,000 dual-purpose bike that's only marginal in the dirt," wrote *Cycle Guide's* tester. And while the G/S was no match for, say, a Honda XL500 for true offroad use, the needs of dual-purpose riders were changing.

Most reviewers agreed the G/S was no dirt bike. "It stretches the definition of 'road' for touring purposes," *Rider* reported in 1981, "it can be taken places not normally considered accessible for a touring rider ... it will carry an adventuresome rider into back country if he or she is willing to live within the bike's limitations." Those limitations included weight (maybe 100 pounds more than a "conventional" offroad bike); a bulky engine with vulnerable cylinders (especially the rocker covers)



ON THE MARKET

1981 BMW R80 G/S: Sold for \$14,979

First-generation BMW R80 G/S models aren't as rare as you might think. Although the first-gen R80 G/S wasn't exactly a high-production model, BMW built almost 22,000 of them. And while many were ridden hard and put away wet, there are plenty around thanks to their high build quality and unique status as the forerunner to the now ubiquitous dual-sport adventure bike. Considered special since new, they continue to command ever higher prices. This eBay offering was for sale in San Francisco, California. Showing 74,000 miles on the clock it was described as "well cared for and in excellent condition." Equipped with the large Paris-Dakar gas tank and dual seat, it was said to be fully serviced. Although certainly a good looking machine, we're amazed someone thought it was \$14,979 nice. At that price, it should have been 100 percent original and perfect, or perfectly restored, which this bike was not.



"The G/S does everything it is supposed to do extremely well."

BMW R80 G/S

Years produced	1980-1986
Claimed power	50hp @ 6,500rpm
Top speed	102mph
Engine type	797.5cc (84.8mm x 70.6mm) air-cooled OHV flat twin
Transmission	5-speed, shaft final drive
Weight (w/half tank fuel)/MPG	437lb/51mpg (avg.)
Price then/now	\$4,800 (1981)/\$4,000-\$8,000

and an under-protected sump; an under-powered battery/starter combination (a kickstarter was fitted, but defeated most testers); limited passenger space; and the lack of a kickstand, requiring the rider to dismount and lift the bike onto the centerstand — something that required considerable effort. A kickstand — also tricky to deploy — was available, but only when attached to the factory-option engine protection bars.

Rider magazine's Clement Salvadori took a G/S to Mexico's Copper Canyon and the desert back roads of California: "The G/S does everything it is supposed to do extremely well. It is great in the curves. It won't make you cry on the interstate. And it is

downright enjoyable to tear along a dirt road or putter down a back-woods trail." But, he noted, "It is not good in soft sand or mud, having too much weight on the front end for that."

Regardless, an R80 G/S aced the Dakar rally in 1981, then with capacity boosted to 980cc, won three times more in 1983-1985. A Dakar-tribute version of the G/S arrived in 1983 with an 8.4-gallon gas tank and a single seat.

It's hard to overstate the impact the G/S had on the market: The G/S spawned the now-massive adventure-touring segment and eventually morphed into the R1200GS — BMW's best-selling bike ever. Keynes would have understood. **MC**

CONTENDERS Newer alternatives to BMW's R80 G/S

1987-1995 BMW R100GS

By the mid-1980s, the G/S had competition from Cagiva, Moto Guzzi and Honda's XLV750R. But rather than going home, BMW went big: a liter-size boxer with a 34-inch seat height weighing almost 500 pounds. The R100GS "Gelände Sport" (instead of G/S for Gelände/Strasse or Dirt/Street) still aspired to adventure riding, but was even more streetable.

The 94mm-bore boxer engine came from the R100RT/RS, but with smaller intake valves and 32mm Bings (down from 40mm) for low-down grunt. A new Marzocchi fork gave 8 inches of travel. Final drive featured the new Paralever anti-jacking combination shaft/single-sided swingarm. Tubeless tires could be used (spokes were attached to the rim outside the bead). A kickstand was stock. "What's most amazing about the GS is that its versatility costs it nothing," *Cycle World* wrote. "On a twisty road ... the GS is the best handling sport bike BMW has yet built. You could make a case that the GS is the world's most versatile motorcycle, that its capabilities and fuel range enable it to go places no other

bike would dare venture. The GS overall is the best BMW we've ever tested."

- 1987-1995
- 58hp @ 6,500rpm/110mph
- 980cc air-cooled OHV flat twin
- 5-speed, shaft final drive
- 485lb (wet)/41mpg (avg.)
- \$5,695 (1987)/\$2,000-\$6,000



1994-2004 BMW R1100GS

For adventure riding, how big is too big? How complex is too complex? BMW pushed the boundaries with the R1100GS. Sharing little with its stone-ax-simple predecessors, the 1100 featured a new engine with 4-valve cammy heads, air/oil cooling, Bosch fuel injection, an anti-dive Paralever front suspension, and optional ABS (which could be disabled for off-road use). All of this added up to almost 600 pounds with fuel.

Overall, though, BMW seemed to have hit the sweet spot. Testers noted its superior handling on paved roads, potholed or not, yet while it performed capably on most unpaved surfaces, it was a handful on rutted trails and a liability in sand. Righting the beast after the inevitable tip-over proved challenging: "Bring a friend," wrote Clement Salvadori in *Rider* magazine, which also chose the GS as its Bike of the Year for 1995.

The same magazine concluded, "The R1100GS isn't merely a motorcycle. It's an expedition kit with a three-year warranty. It also happens to have excellent, uncompromised street handling, performance and comfort in what many view as a class full of compromises."

- 1994-2004
- 76hp @ 6,500rpm (at rear wheel)/123mph
- 1,085cc air/oil-cooled OHC 4-valve flat twin
- 5-speed, shaft final drive
- 589lb (wet)/40mpg (avg.)
- \$12,990 (1996)/\$2,500-\$5,500



2019 Las Vegas auctions, Rollie Free and around the world with Elspeth Beard

2019 Las Vegas auctions

Auction houses Mecum and Bonhams are busy getting ready for the 2019 Las Vegas motorcycle auctions. Bonhams' one-day auction takes place on Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Rio All Suite Hotel & Casino, and Mecum will return with another massive portfolio of bikes, with 1,750 machines scheduled to go under the hammer during Mecum's six-day mega-auction, Jan. 22-27, at South Point Hotel & Casino.

Headlining the Mecum auction (mecum.com) will be 238 motorcycles from the MC Collection in Stockholm, Sweden. Established in 1999 by Swedish vintage motorcycle enthusiasts Christer Christensson and Ove Johansson, the MC Collection is staggering in its breadth, and bikes on offer range from the world's first production motorcycle, an 1894 Hildebrand & Wolfmüller, to a 1989 BMW K1. Also to be sold in the no-reserve auction are a replica 1934 Husqvarna 500 GP racer, two Brough Superiors (a 1925 SS100 Grand Sport and a 1936 SS80) and a 1913 Brough WE 6 horsepower V-twin manufactured by Brough Superior founder George Brough's father, William, who built motorcycles from 1902 to 1918. Mecum will also auction



Bonhams' Vegas auction will feature the second-ever Vincent Black Lightning.

off the Kennedy Collection, with 38 bikes offered at no reserve. Japanese bikes make up the bulk of the Kennedy collection and range from a 1966 Suzuki X6 Hustler to a 2009 Kawasaki ZX-14R still in its crate, but the collection also includes a rare 200cc 1959 Parilla Grand Sport.

Highlighting Bonhams' Thursday auction (bonhams.com) is the second-ever Vincent Black Lightning. Ordered by NSU works rider Hans Stärkle at the 1948 Earls Court Motorcycle Show in London, it was delivered to Stärkle in January of 1949. He campaigned it in sidecar racing until 1952, and then sold it to a Swiss enthusiast who converted it to road use, adding lights, a passenger seat, footrests and a muffler. It sold two more times, the fourth owner retiring it after engine troubles, before eventually ending up with Vincent enthusiast Ernst Hegeler. Hegeler rebuilt the Lightning and set it up for touring duty in 1971, after which he put some 30,000 miles on it before deciding to restore it to its original specification in 2000. One of the most important Vincents ever offered for sale, it's expected to hammer for as much as \$500,000.

Other features of the expected 250-300 bike Bonhams auction include the ex-Steve McQueen Nimbus with sidecar, along with vintage motorcycle memorabilia.

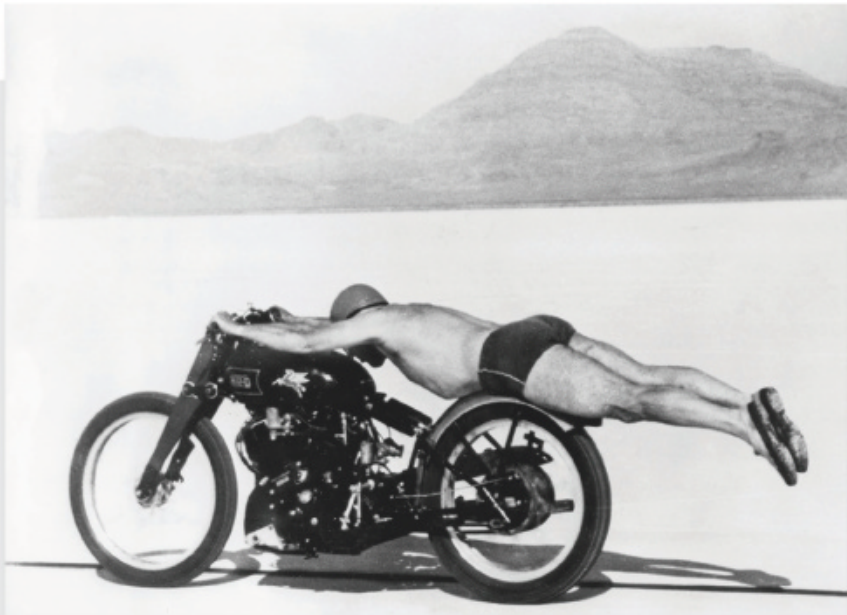


Replica 1934 Husqvarna 500 from the MC Collection to be auctioned by Mecum.

Rollie Free revisited

On Sept. 13, 1948, Roland “Rollie” Free, riding prone on a specially prepared Vincent Black Shadow considered the first Black Lightning, and wearing nothing more than a pair of beach shoes and a bathing suit and cap, made his historic 150.313mph land speed record run on the Bonneville Salt Flats. The image of Free tearing across the Salt Flats on the “Bathing Suit Bike” is indelibly etched into the motorcycle community’s collective psyche, a vision of speed and outrageous daring that’s never been equaled in the 70 years since.

Recently released on Vimeo, *Black Lightning: The Rollie Free Story*, details Rollie Free’s life and the facts of his epic 1948 Bonneville run. Produced and directed by



motorsports film producer Zach Siglow, the documentary-style, 35-minute tribute features interviews and insights from notables including William Edgar, son of John Edgar, the owner of Free’s record-setting Vincent, and Marty Dickerson, who set two Bonneville records aboard his own Vincent, the “Blue Bike,” in 1951 and 1953.

Free and Edgar were the perfect pair. A former speed boat racer knocked out of competition after an accident, Edgar wanted to beat the 136.183mph Land Speed Record set by Joe Petralli in 1937 aboard a streamlined Harley-Davidson. Snubbed by H-D early in his career, Free was devoted to beating them at their own game and readily embraced the opportunity to ride Edgar’s Vincent.

Also featuring commentary from pre-eminent U.S. motorcycle historian Jerry Hatfield, author of *Flat Out! The Rollie Free Story*, and motorsports commentator and historian Alain de Cadenet, Siglow’s film is highly recommended. Yours to stream or download for only \$8. More info: vimeo.com/preservationproductions

Around the world

In 1982, 23-year-old architecture student Elspeth Beard left her family home in London, England, bound for New York City. Waiting for her there was her 1974 BMW R60/6, and the start of what would become a two-year, 35,000-mile ride across five continents. When she finally returned to London, Beard parked her BMW and moved along, the experience slowly sinking into the past. But a few years ago, Beard started looking through her old diaries and photo albums, and in 2017, 33 years after her journey, her story, *Lone Rider: The First British Woman to Motorcycle Around the World*, was finally published.

That tag line, “the First British Woman to Motorcycle Around the World,” is perhaps something of an unnecessary definer, as outside of French journalist Anne-France Dautheville’s approximately 12,500-mile ride across three continents in 1973, it seems almost certain that Beard’s ride was the first of its kind for *any* woman.

That it took Beard so long to dedicate herself to writing about her life-changing journey tells us much about her. “I always meant to write a book about my ride,” Beard told one interviewer recently, “but I didn’t bother because nobody was interested, so I just got on with other things in my life.” Remarkably, at the time of her ride, nobody *was* interested. Beard made queries to accessory manufacturers and motorcycle magazines, looking for sponsorship and coverage of her travels, but was met with either silence or mocking indifference. Yet she got on with it anyway, and decades later, we’re finally learning about Beard’s epic trip.

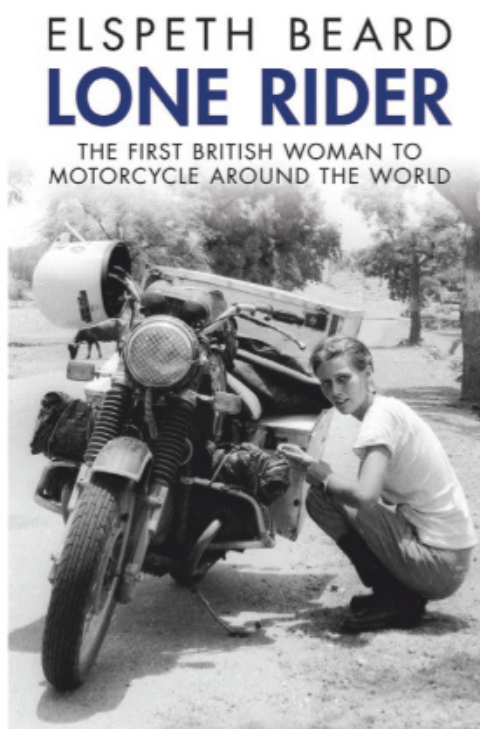
This is much more than the story of a ride. It’s a hugely complex examination of a life lived, opening windows of introspection into Beard’s memories of a family dominated by a quirky but clearly genius father, tempered by a smart but somehow fragile mother. Neither parent understood their strong-willed daughter, or recognized her focused intensity, a fact that helped drive her to make her epic ride.

Most reviews of Beard’s experience focus on the specific hardships she faced — and there were many, from obstinate border officials and corrupt police to dealing with illness and hunger, accidents and pain, and unwanted sexual advances. Travelling alone, as a woman, has never been easy or particularly approved, and Beard lays bare the risk of exposure, both physically and emotionally, of living and loving, of giving, of daring to push when circumstances suggest you shouldn’t, of having the confidence — even when you’re weak — of the strength of your convictions.

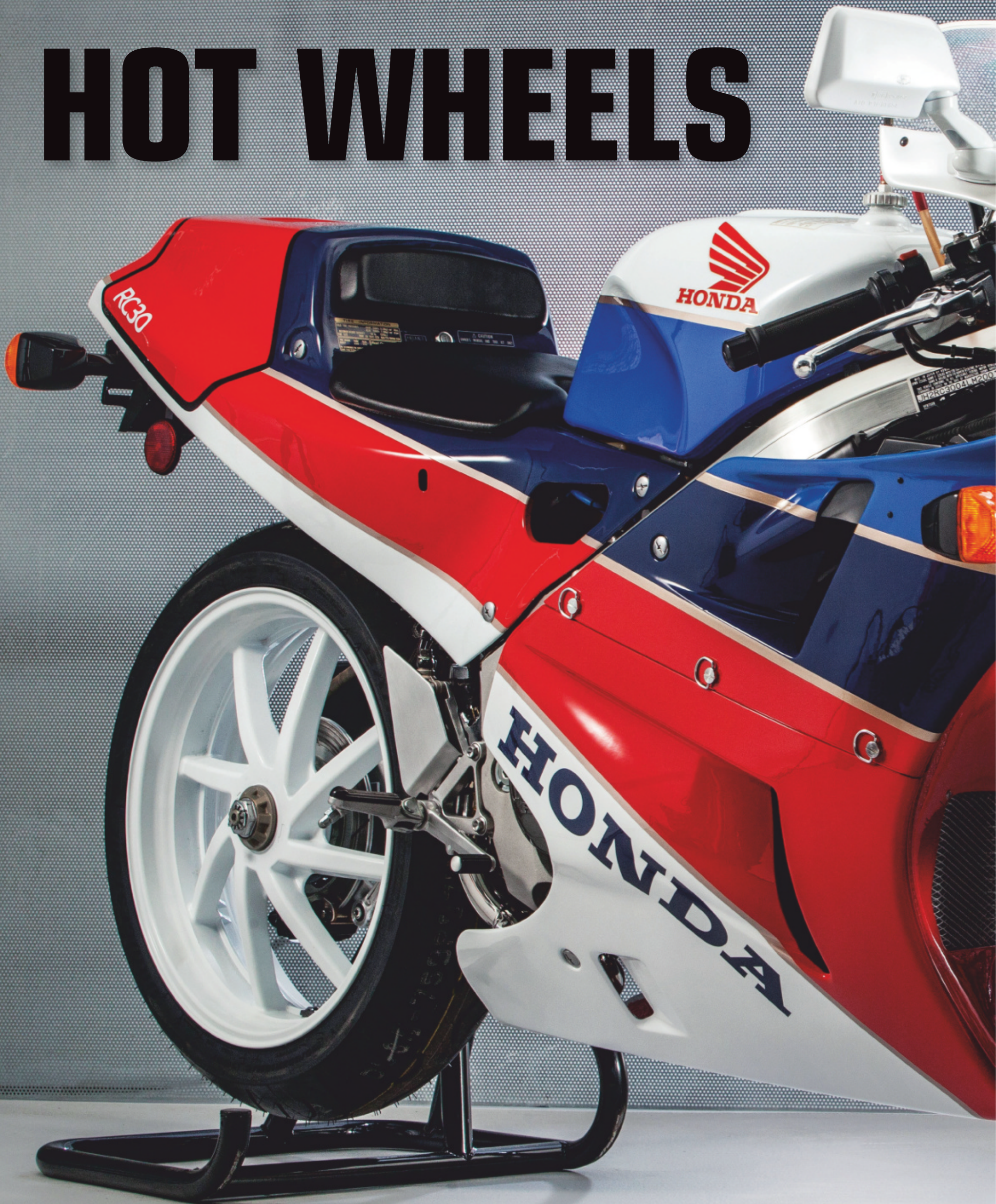
By her own admittance, Beard was only marginally prepared for her trip. Having researched almost nothing about her route, she had saved a little over \$6,000, enough, she hoped, to at least get her to Australia. From there, she’d just figure it out, relying on her determination to guide her.

At some levels the trip was a whim, an in-your-face repudiation of the naysayers and doubters around her. Yet once committed, Beard saw the journey through. A survivor, she did as she needed to keep moving forward. She became quite adept at attending to her BMW’s needs, mending it as necessary to continue the path upon which she’d embarked.

Exploration and discovery are at the core of why we ride, and Beard embraced these essentials in a way few people ever have or will. Beard’s trip was the necessary expression of her searching soul, her BMW supplying the means for that essential discovery. That she took more than three decades to tell us about her journey turns out to be an unanticipated bonus. The time between the doing and the telling has given Beard perspective and appreciation, a heightened ability and deeper capacity to understand and explain the why of her journey, a question equally if not more compelling than the how. Even if you don’t ride, Beard’s probing narrative makes this a book to savor. Octane Press (octanepress.com); 312 pages, \$19.95. To order a copy, see our ad on Page 80. — Richard Backus



HOT WHEELS





1990 Honda VFR750R/RC30

Story by Robert Smith
Photos by Jeff Barger

It's a well-worn cliché, but “race on Sunday, sell on Monday” has been a solid philosophy in motorcycling for over a century. Racing has been a showcase for the technology likely to be seen in future street bikes. Features like disc brakes, monoshock suspension systems and multi-valve cylinder heads all debuted on Grand Prix race bikes before finding their way to the street.

But in the 1980s, Grand Prix racing, which was then dominated by 2-strokes, ran into an identity crisis. The major makers were pouring money into 2-stroke engine development to stay ahead of their racing competition, but with the phasing out of 2-stroke street bikes, the expertise gained would no longer translate to production machines. In the U.S., Formula 750, also dominated by 2-strokes, was facing a similar issue. And as race bikes became less and less like the sport bikes in dealer showrooms, race fans lost interest, leading to a deeper disconnect between the sport and the street. A resolution would emerge, and it helps to review some of motorcycle racing's history to put the outcome in context.

One of the most popular — and dangerous — races on the Grand Prix circuit was the Isle of Man TT. Riders generally accepted the extreme hazards as part of racing, but when his friend Gilberto Parlotti was killed in the 1972 TT, then World Champion Giacomo Agostini vowed he would never again race on the Island. Other top riders joined Agostini's boycott, leading to the TT being dropped from the World GP calendar in 1976.

Britain's motorcycle sport organizing body, the Auto Cycle Union, proposed an alternative formula to include the Manx TT, a new racing series for modified street bikes pitting 1,000cc 4-strokes against 2-strokes up to 500cc. The first Formula TT race was run under the FIM stewardship in 1977, and the formula quickly proved popular, especially after Mike Hailwood's comeback win on the Isle of Man in 1978 and Joey Dunlop's run of five championships from 1982-1986. By that year, there were eight Formula TT rounds on tracks all across the globe. In the U.S., the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) initiated a new race series in 1976 also based on production machines: AMA Superbike.

Formula TT and AMA Superbike were so successful that they invited competition. This arrived in 1988 in the form of a startup rival, World Superbike racing. Also based on street bikes, World Superbike, or WSBK, pitted 1,000cc 4-stroke twins against 750cc fours. By 1990 it had eclipsed Formula TT, which held its last race that year.

And while Formula TT entrants (at least in the early years) were mainly supported by dealers and private sponsors, WSBK quickly attracted factory backing, setting the stage for the legendary battles of the 1990s between thundering Ducati V-twins and howling Honda V4s.



Under the skin

Honda's entry into WSBK was with the VFR750R, otherwise known by its factory designation, RC30. Though superficially similar to the VFR750F Interceptor of 1986, the RC30 shared almost no parts with it, and the design started pretty much from a clean sheet of paper. And while the Interceptor was produced and sold in large numbers, the RC30 was a homologation special. That is, it was produced in just enough numbers to satisfy FIM rules for the minimum number of street-legal units offered for sale, and no more than 3,000 RC30s were built.

The differences between the VFR750F and VFR750R stem from their origins. The F was a development of the VF750F Interceptor, itself derived from the

VF750C Magna and VF750S Sabre. The VF750F used the 16-valve V4 engine from the C and S, but with the cylinders at 45 degrees to the horizontal, and chain final drive replacing the shaft drive. Oddly, as a result of this change the transmission went from 6- to 5-speed — the chain drive took up more space in the gear case. But the VF750 engine was also starting to gain a reputation for camshaft wear issues. Not every bike was affected, which made the cause even more elusive. Recalls and production changes helped, but the Interceptor's reputation was tarnished. Honda was committed to the V4 format, so a bold move was needed.

The new VFR750F Interceptor of 1986 borrowed the "cassette" gear-driven val-

vetrain from the VF1000R, which was known to be durable and reliable. The sixth transmission gear was reinstated, bucket tappets were used in the valve-train, and the revised power unit went into a new perimeter alloy beam frame replacing the VF's steel tube item, with a "Pro-Arm" cast alloy, single-sided swing-arm controlling the rear wheel. It was updated for 1990, and stayed in production until 1997.

Made in Japan

For the RC30, Honda's engineers worked backwards from a race bike, rather than forward from a street bike.

It's said the impetus for the RC30 program came less from World Superbike but more for a machine that could

The RC30 in context

Between 1984 and 1996, Honda Racing Corporation (HRC) used bewilderingly similar designations for its 750cc road/race V4s. How can you tell them apart?

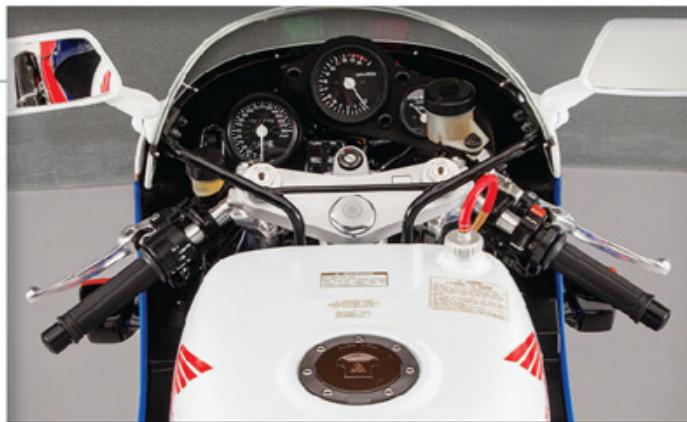
The RS750R endurance racer of 1984 was based on the 1983 U.S. VF750F Superbike. A new designation, RVF750 was adopted for 1985, though the bikes were similar in specification. For 1986, the RVF750 gained the single-sided swingarm, licensed from ELF Racing, that would appear later on the RC30. That year also marked Honda's third successive World Endurance and AMA Superbike titles for the RVF. The street VFR750F was adapted from the RVF750.

1988 saw the introduction of the all-new VFR750R/RC30

and the first of two successive World Superbike wins, plus victories at Daytona in 1989 and 1991. From 1991-1993 the RC30 concentrated on the Superbike class, with the RVF750 continued in endurance racing.

The new RC45 of 1994 (also known as RVF750 and RVF750R) was aimed at both Superbike and World Endurance, and duly won the WSBK title in 1997 and the World Endurance title in 1995 and 1998. It also scored wins at Suzuka (1994 and 1999) and Daytona (1996 and 1998).

All RC-designated Hondas were built at Honda Racing Corporation's separate facility, not on a regular production line. — Robert Smith



1990 HONDA VFR750R/RC30

Engine: 748cc liquid-cooled DOHC 16-valve 90-degree V4, 70mm x 48.6mm bore and stroke, 11:1 compression ratio, 86hp @ 11,500rpm at rear wheel (period test)

Top speed: 153mph (period test)

Carburetion: Four 38mm CV Keihin

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Twin-spar aluminum frame/55.4in (1,407mm)

Suspension: 43mm Showa telescopic fork w/adjustable compression and rebound front, single-sided "Pro-Arm" swingarm w/single Showa shock w/adjustable preload, compression and rebound rear

Brakes: Dual 12.2in (310mm) discs w/4-piston calipers front, single 8.7in (221mm) disc w/2-piston caliper rear

Tires: 120/70V x 17in front, 170/60VR x 18in rear

Weight (wet): 475lb (216kg)

Seat height: 30in (762mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 3.6gal (13.6ltr)/37mpg (period test)

Price then/now: \$14,998 (1990)/\$25,000-\$50,000 (ridden examples)

successfully compete in the prestigious Suzuka eight-hour endurance race, and the World Endurance series. From its debut in 1978, the Suzuka was run under TT Formula One rules, meaning it was open to street-based 1,000cc motorcycles. A rule change in 1984 limited capacity to 750cc, and the requirement for entrants' bikes to be street-based was strictly enforced. After the rule change, Honda won the Suzuka for the next three years with its RS750R and RVF750, both based on the 1983 Honda VF750F Superbike engine. Regardless of its endurance intentions, the RC30 proved to be particularly suitable for World Superbike racing, and won the championship in its first two years, 1988 and 1989, with Fred Merkel riding. However, WSBK's 750cc four/1,000cc twin formula proved advantageous for the Ducatis, and the RC30's successes waned after 1990. Honda responded with one more development of the V4: The RVF750R (RC45) replaced the RC30 as Honda's premier racer in WSBK and endurance racing from 1994. It featured PGM-FI fuel injection and moved the camshaft drive from the center of the crankshaft to the end.

Inside the RC30

The RC30 used a liquid-cooled 90-degree V4 with 16 valves and four overhead camshafts, the same basic layout as all Honda V4s. Drive to the camshafts was by a cassette gear set closer in origin to their race bikes than the Interceptor, with roller bearings supporting the cam-

shafts, nixing the VF750's camshaft wear issues. The cams also drove the valves directly via shim-and-bucket.

The RC30 shared the VFR750F's 70mm x 48.6mm bore and stroke, but used titanium connecting rods and two-ring pistons to reduce friction and piston weight. Like all Honda V4 race bikes, the RC30's crankpins were set at 360 degrees, a bit like two Ducati engines side by side; the VFR750F stuck with a 180-degree angle. This configuration gave the RC30 its signature thrumming exhaust note.

Drive to the slipper clutch was by gear, then to a new 6-speed close-ratio gearbox. The RC30 featured a heat exchanger to dissipate heat from engine oil to the coolant radiator rather than a separate oil cooler. Many other ancillaries, like the oil pump, water pump, starter and aluminum gas tank were also unique to the RC.

Forming an integral part of the chassis, the powertrain bolted to a twin-spar light alloy beam frame carrying a cast aluminum swingarm with eccentric adjustment of the rear axle for chain tension. The swingarm was controlled by a single Showa shock with adjustment for spring





Talk about a race bike with lights: The RC30 is about as close as it gets to a production racer for the street.

RC to the VFR750F was “like stepping out of a music-and-smoke-filled rock-and-roll bar and finding yourself in a plush living room with the stereo playing. The song may be the same, but the ambiance ...”

Roman Brotz's RC30

Roman Brotz bought his RC30 new from a dealer in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. “I wanted to get a motorcycle that had up-to-date race features on it, like having the engine totally covered by a cowling. I wanted to have something that looked a little bit more fast so I could race it, and I thought that this bike was just the ticket.”

Brotz never did race the RC30, but he did compete at Blackhawk Farms and Indianapolis on a Suzuki RGV250 Gamma. It was the timeless looks of the RC30 that appealed to him. “If you look at the bike today, I mean, it looks like a race bike. That bike still has some good looks to it.”

Its current good looks are courtesy of motorcycle restorers Retrospeed (retro speed.net) in Belgium, Wisconsin. Many years ago, Brotz let his girlfriend's brother ride the RC30. He hit a patch of gravel and dropped the bike. Though the damage was minimal, Brotz decided to park the RC30. “I had a cover over it, but mice got in and kind of made a mess of it.”

And it was only recently that he considered restoring it, at the suggestion of a nephew. “I didn't ride it for a number of years. Certain parts like the front fork were starting to oxidize. The windshield was cloudy and, yeah, I thought, ‘Well what the heck.’ I was thinking that the bike was a person or something. It's something I wanted to make healthy again. Retrospeed gave me a quote for the job. I saw examples of their work in a motorcycle magazine. It wasn't cheap to do it.”

Brotz's reaction to the restoration? “Oh, it's unbelievable. He [Retrospeed owner Brady Ingelse] does absolutely miraculous work. I couldn't believe how well he was able to restore the original parts.” Brotz plans to keep the RC30 for the time being. “I don't have any plans to sell it, at least for now,” he says.

Given the RC30's rising value — a 1990 with 14 push miles from new sold for a record \$92,000 at Bonhams' 2018 Las Vegas auction — he'll likely come out ahead when he does sell, whatever the restoration cost. **MC**

preload and compression and rebound damping. At the front went a Showa 43mm conventional cartridge fork with compression and rebound adjustment. The single-sided swingarm and front fork with quick-release axle clamps were both intended to facilitate quick wheel changes in endurance racing, as was the 4-into-2-into-1 exhaust mounted on the left side, leaving the rear wheel clear for easy removal and replacement. Triple Nissin disc brakes provided impressive stopping, while the bike rolled on 120/70

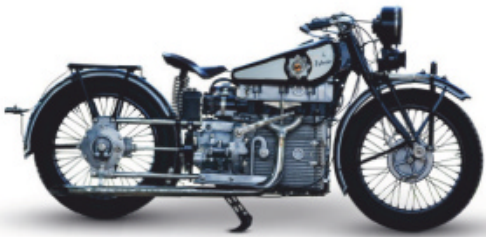
x 17-inch bias-ply front and 170/60 x 18-inch radial rear tires.

Cycle magazine tested an RC30 in 1990 and enjoyed the flat torque curve, which made it “exceptionally easy to ride fast — dial the throttle on in a corner at 6-7,000rpm, and perfect thrust reaches the rear wheel, building smoothly as you exit ... The RC30 is a fast motorcycle that never feels as if it's working hard.” They found the handling limited only by the tires: “... maybe only slicks would match the RC's capabilities.” Switching from the

Bonhams

AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1793

ENTRIES NOW INVITED | CONSIGN TODAY



1928 WINDHOFF 746CC FOUR
Sold for \$230,500



1929 HENDERSON 1,301CC KJ FOUR
Sold for \$74,750



**1950 VINCENT 998CC RAPIDE
SERIES-C TOURING MODEL**
Sold for \$92,000



*The ex-Tony McAlpine, Jack Ehret,
Australian Land Speed Record-breaking*
**1951 VINCENT 998CC
BLACK LIGHTNING**
Sold for \$929,000



**1951 TRIUMPH 649CC 6T BONNEVILLE
SALT FLATS RACING MOTORCYCLE**
Sold for \$35,650



1990 HONDA VFR750R TYPE RC30
Sold for \$92,000

*Owned and ridden by Steve McQueen
in the film "On Any Sunday"*
1970 HUSQVARNA 400 CROSS
Sold for \$230,500



The Las Vegas Motorcycle Auction

Important Collectors' Motorcycles

The Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas | January 24, 2019

COMPLIMENTARY AUCTION APPRAISAL

To discuss any aspect of selling or buying collectors motorcycles at auction, please contact the Los Angeles office or visit bonhams.com/motorcycles to submit a complimentary auction appraisal request.

INQUIRIES

Motorcycles Los Angeles
+1 (323) 436 5470
craig.mallery@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/motorcycles

CATALOG

+44 (0) 1666 502 200
subscriptions@bonhams.com

 [@bonhamsmotoring](https://www.instagram.com/bonhamsmotoring)

SITTING WHERE BIG SID SAT



A vintage 1950 Vincent Meteor motorcycle is parked next to a rusty, weathered gas pump. The gas pump has a sign that reads "THIS SALE \$ [dials] GALLONS PER GALLON INCLUDES ALL TAXES" and a "REGULAR" sign. The motorcycle has a black leather seat, a silver fender, and a black frame. The background shows a white picket fence and some trees.

A unique 1950 Series B Vincent Meteor

Story and photos by Corey Levenson

Sidney Morton Biberman may not be a household name, but as Vincent owners and aficionados know, “Big Sid” was one of the marque’s most famous and respected tuners and restorers. At almost 6 foot 5 inches and 300 pounds in his prime, he was a larger than life presence on the dragstrip, at rallies and on the international Vincent scene for more than half a century.

Sid grew up in Norfolk, Virginia, developing an early love of motorcycles as a teenager. As a 20-year-old in 1950, Sid rode his first Vincent, a friend’s Black Shadow, and was profoundly impressed by the machine’s performance and engineering excellence. By 1953, Sid had bought himself a red Vincent Rapide, joined the Vincent Owners Club and, while stationed in Germany as an American serviceman, visited the factory in Stevenage, England.

Sid had a tuner’s ear and an uncanny sense of what an engine needed in order to perform at its best, and was best known for making the company’s 998cc twins go faster. Over the ensuing



1950 VINCENT SERIES B METEOR

Engine: 499cc air-cooled OHV single, 84mm x 90mm bore and stroke, 8:1 compression ratio (6.45:1 stock), 30hp @ 5,300rpm (est.)
Top speed: 100mph (claimed)
Carburetion: Single 32mm Amal Mk1 Concentric (1-1/16in Amal 276 stock)
Transmission: 4-speed Burman, chain final drive
Electrics: 12v Miller generator, BTH magneto ignition (Lucas K1F GM2 magneto stock)
Frame/wheelbase: Steel backbone w/engine as a stressed member/55.75in (1,416mm)
Suspension: Brampton girder front, dual shocks w/friction and hydraulic damping rear (friction damping only stock)
Brakes: Twin 7in (178mm) SLS drums front & rear
Tires: 90/90 x 19in front, 100/90 x 19in rear (originally 3 x 20in front, 3.5 x 19in rear)
Weight (dry): 386lb (175kg)
Seat height: 32.75in (832mm)
Fuel capacity: 4.2gal (16ltr)
Price then/now: \$692 U.S. (approx.)/\$25,000 (est.)



Big Sid's Meteor wears a host of hopped-up parts, including an 8:1 compression ratio forged CP-Carrillo piston and an Andrews Mk1 cam.

girder forks seen on A and B machines. The introduction of the Vincent-designed Girdraulic forks, as well as a re-branding from "HRD" to "Vincent" on the tanks and crankcases, marked the transition from Series B to Series C machines.

For the postwar singles and twins, there were essentially three levels of tune as a result of differing carb sizes, compression ratios and cams. Among the twins, the Rapide was the touring model, the Black Shadow the sport model and the Black Lightning a race-only model. In parallel, the Meteor, Comet and Grey

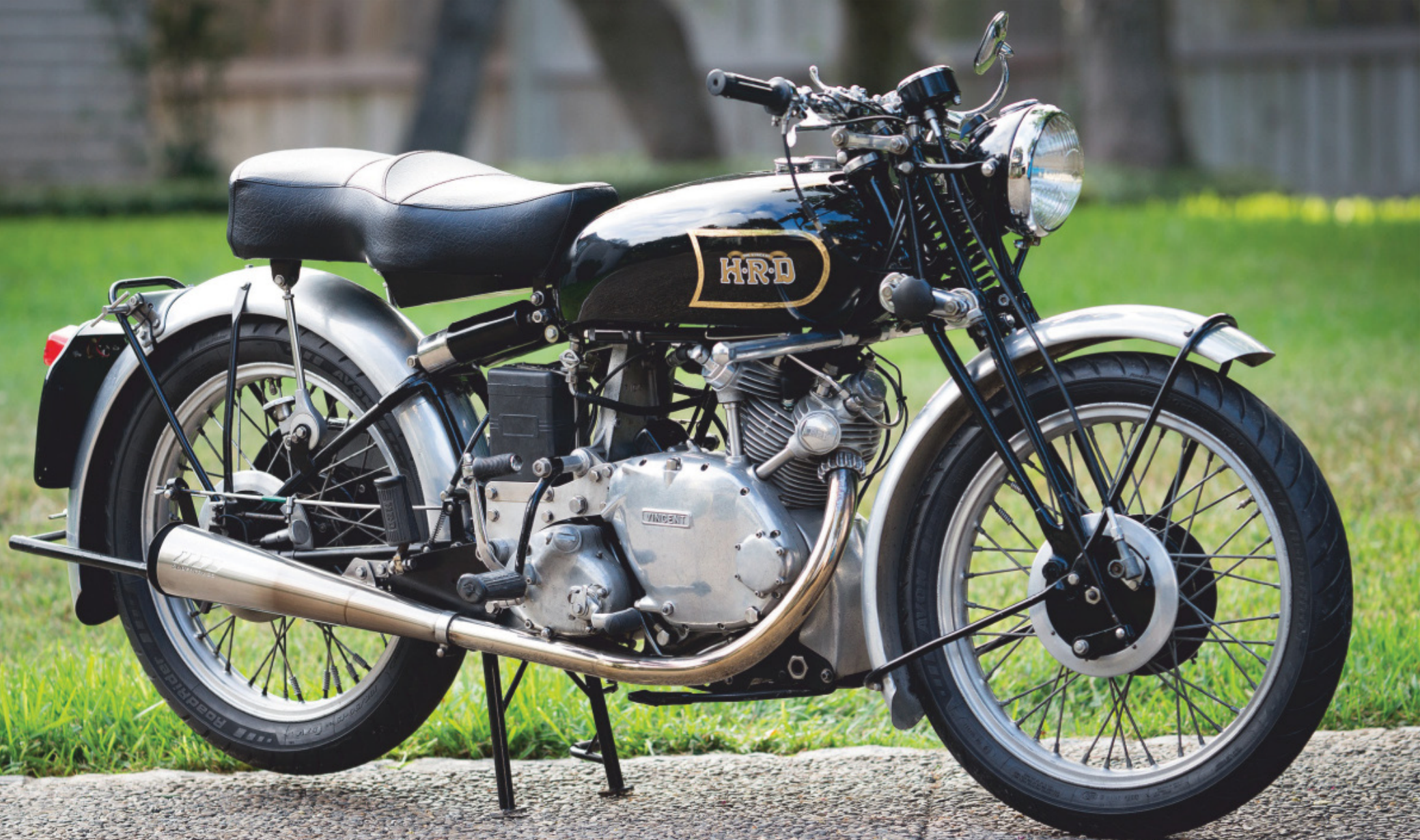
Flash singles were tuned to Rapide, Shadow and Lightning specification, respectively.

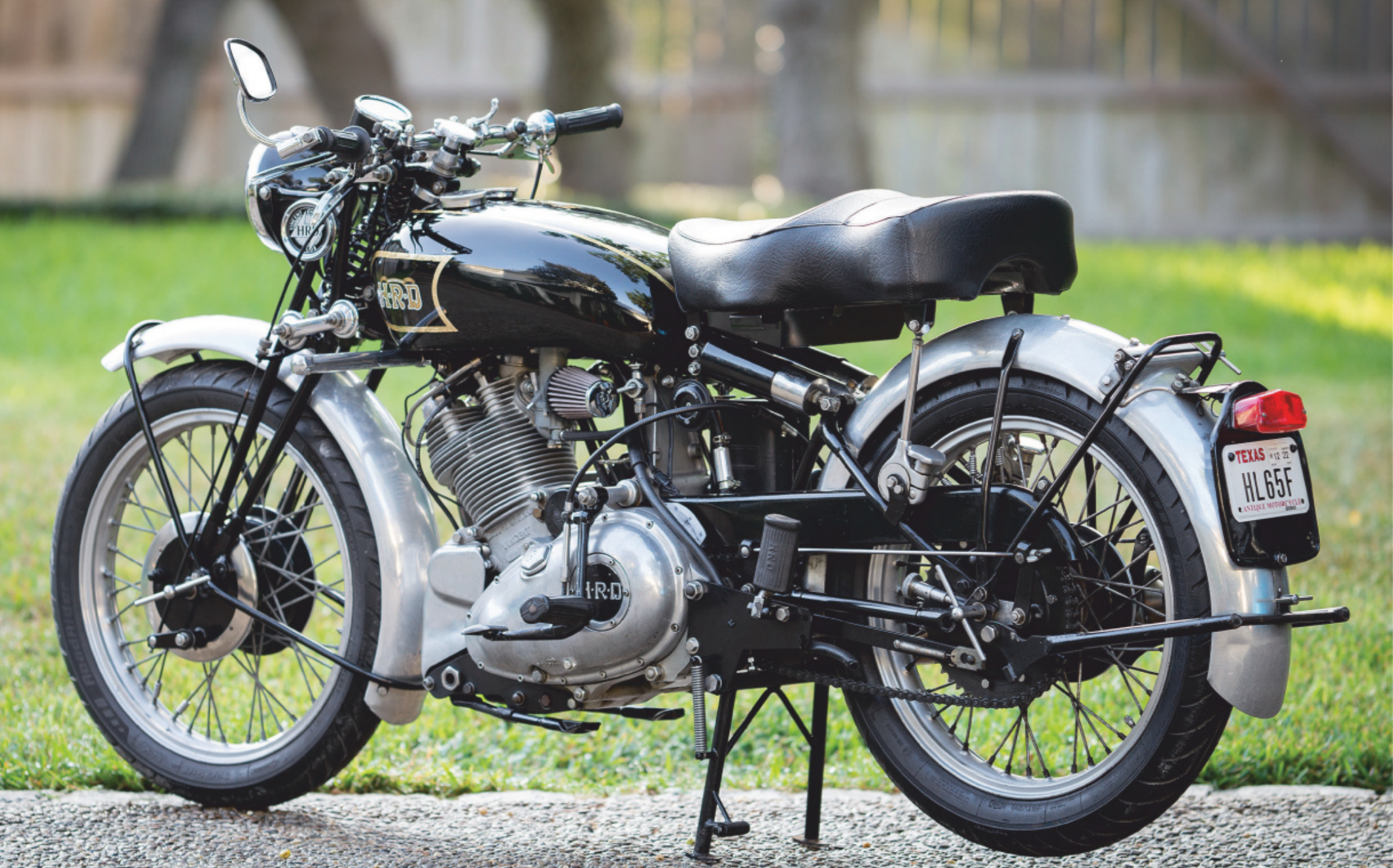
The first big British bike show after World War II was the 1948 Earls Court show in London, and Vincent chose that

60 years, he built many fast Vincents and established himself as a pre-eminent Vincent authority. Yet throughout his long association with Vincents, he owned only one of their 499cc singles: a 1950 Series B Meteor. Sid bought the Meteor in 1993 when he was 63 years old and wanted a bike that was lighter and more nimble than the larger twins. During the 20 years Sid owned the Meteor, he made extensive modifications to improve its performance. For Sid, functionality always took precedence over originality.

Vincent singles

Vincent produced 499cc singles and 998cc twins before World War II (Series A bikes), and then after the war (Series B, C and D bikes). All the machines shared an 84mm bore and a 90mm stroke. A major redesign took place between the Series A and Series B machines, although there were some shared items such as the Brampton





opportunity to introduce their new postwar models. As a result of supply issues with the new Girdraulic forks, the Series B Meteors, Rapides and Shadows were produced with the prewar Brampton girder forks, while the Series C models were introduced with Girdraulic forks. Once adequate supplies of the new Girdraulics were available, the Series B models were subsequently dropped in 1950.

During the brief period when both Series B Meteor and Series C Comets were on offer, the company tried to differentiate between the two models (and justify the cost difference) by offering the Meteor without the two front prop stands and magneto cover found on the Comet. In addition, the Meteor's lower compression ratio and smaller carb gave it somewhat inferior performance to the Comet. Since the price difference was relatively small (about 25 pounds sterling, or roughly \$80 U.S. at the time) most buyers opted for the Comet. Only 126 Series B Meteors were produced between December 1948 and February 1950, making the Series B Meteor one of the rarer Vincent models; only Black Lightnings,

Grey Flashes and White Shadows were made in fewer numbers. By comparison, approximately 3,900 postwar Comets were produced.

The singles share many components with the twins, but weigh about 75 pounds less and have a 3/4-inch shorter wheelbase, making them more responsive to steering input and actually more fun to ride in the twisties than their bigger siblings. Many feel that the Brampton forks afford a lighter feel to the bikes compared to the Girdraulic-equipped machines, and some contend the Series B Meteor is the best handling of the road-going Vincents.

Unlike the twins, the singles feature a separate engine and gearbox. A single-row primary chain drives the conventional multi-plate clutch for the Burman BAP 4-speed gearbox. Further, the twins have their chain drive on the right side, whereas the singles have it on the left. The cycle parts — fenders, brakes, wheels, seat, tank, forks, instruments, etc. — are the same on both twins and singles.



It's not often you see a Vincent running a SuperTrapp exhaust. Big Sid's inscription on the timing gear steady plate.

Big Sid's 1950 Series B Meteor

Not much of the history of Sid's Meteor is known until the early 1990s, when the Vincent Owners Club (www.voc.uk.com) began keeping computer records. Sid bought the bike in 1993 from a VOC member in the London area. According to factory records accessible through the VOC, Sid's Meteor was ordered from the factory on Feb. 8, 1950, making it one of the last Meteors made. The finished machine was road-tested and then delivered to the Kings Oxford dealership owned by Stan Hailwood, father of the famous racer Mike Hailwood.

Vincent's have three identification numbers: an engine number, an upper frame member (UFM) number and a rear frame member (RFM) number. According to the VOC, the engine number on Sid's bike (F5AB/2/3521) is correct for a Series B Meteor, but the UFM (RC8044) is from a 1951 Rapide, the RFM (RC/1/8537) is from a 1951 Comet, and the timing cover is from a 1950 Rapide. Sid's philosophy was old-school: "Who cares about matching numbers, just ride it!"

Keen-eyed readers will have noticed that although the Meteor's engine cases are embossed "Vincent," the gas tank is marked "HRD" in large letters. 1950 was a transitional year for Vincent, during which the HRD designation (from the days when Philip Vincent bought Howard R. Davies' motorcycle company) was dropped because of confusion in the U.S. with Harley-Davidson. During the rebranding, bikes were made with cases, tanks and inspection caps emblazoned with HRD, Vincent or a mixture of markings.

Sid enjoyed the Meteor — it was easy to start, comfortable, reliable and handled well. Naturally, he felt it was underpowered and wasted no time making changes to wring more performance from it. Modifications included an 8:1 compression ratio forged CP-Carrillo piston, an Andrews Mk1 cam, a SuperTrapp competition exhaust and a double-speed oil pump. The engine also features a modified breather setup attached at the inlet valve-inspection cap, and the inlet port was opened up from the stock 27mm to 32mm to mate with an Amal Mk1 32mm Concentric carb. A hydraulic damper was added to the



The original ammeter sits in the headlight bucket (left), just forward of the Smiths speedometer, which is mounted to the top of the fork (below left).



rear suspension and the wheels were rebuilt with 19-inch Weinmann alloy rims. A magneto cover and Comet spec prop stands were added. The electrics were upgraded from 6 to 12 volts with a JG voltage converter (still positive earth) and the aging Lucas magneto was replaced with a modern BTH magneto (which is really an alternator with coil ignition).

The compression ratio and carb size are the same as the race-only Grey Flash version of the single, and output is probably somewhere between a stock Meteor (26 horsepower) and a Grey Flash (35 horsepower). Sid's son, Matthew, told me that in 1998 he and Sid rode their Vincents on several hot laps at Road Atlanta during the AMA Big Kahuna race weekend. With Sid on his Black Shadow and Matthew following on Sid's Meteor, they were clocked at 105mph down the back straight.

How Sid's Meteor landed in my garage

I met and befriended Sid and Matthew in 2009 at the Barber Vintage Festival while they were on a book tour promoting *Big Sid's Vincati*. Afterward, I stayed in touch with Matthew, talking about his ongoing and planned Vincent projects, and telling him that while I had long dreamed of owning a Vincent, my dream was unlikely to come true unless I won the lottery.

Sadly, Sid passed away in 2013, and new homes needed to be found for his Vincents. Matthew's preferred ride is a Black Shadow that Sid built for him, and he had no need to keep any of Sid's bikes. Matthew and Sid had previously discussed the eventual fate of Sid's machines, and agreed that his Vincents should go to friends and fellow enthusiasts when Sid was

no longer around to enjoy the bikes.

Matthew gradually found new homes for Sid's Rapides and Shadows. The last remaining bike was the 1950 Meteor. In November 2017, Matthew asked me if I'd be interested in serving as the bike's next custodian. I don't know if it was because I am now the age that Sid was when he got the Meteor or maybe that Matthew knew I'd respect the memory of Sid by riding the bike and not restore or flip it for a quick buck. Whatever the reason, I



Corey Levenson and the Meteor in Texas (left). Big Sid and son Matthew aboard the Meteor at Road Atlanta in 1998.

was flattered by the offer.

After thinking about it for less than a day, I realized this was probably my best chance to own a Vincent. And not just any Vincent — a rare model that had been built and ridden by someone I liked and respected and who also knew how to build fast Vincents. This was one of those decisions, like getting married or having children, that can't be approached logically. You don't do it because it makes sense, you do it because you can't imagine not doing it. I called Matthew back and told him to hang a "Sold" sign on the Meteor; I'd work out the details later. At the end of December, just in time for the holidays, the Meteor arrived in Texas and was welcomed to its new home.

Riding and maintaining the Meteor

Even though it had been several years since the bike had been ridden regularly, the Meteor was in running condition when she arrived. A new BTH magneto had been installed prior to shipping the bike and the ignition timing required some minor tweaking using a degree wheel. The generator needed minor repair and the ammeter replaced, but other than that, the bike was in quite good shape. I've put modern Avon tires on it and found a replacement for the missing tire pump that mounts under the fuel tank (Thanks, Herb Harris!).

On the road, the Meteor is quite comfortable and feels very civilized. I've put about 1,000 miles on it, the longest ride being about 200 miles. I'm getting about 60mpg and the tank holds 4 gallons, so the range is well over 200 miles. I'm confident the Meteor would be suited to long days in the saddle.

Here's how Sid described the Meteor: "Fires up with one easy kick, idles like Big Ben, pulls strong to well beyond the ton. Very near vibration-less through the range. Handles very light, excellent brakes. A marvelous road bike, especially on back country roads." I have yet to take her well beyond the ton, but I agree with the rest of Sid's assessment.

My only frames of reference for 500cc British singles are my 1963 Velocette Scrambler and a 1970 BSA 441 Victor I rode many years ago. The Vincent feels more composed than the other two bikes, but it's not really a fair comparison — the Meteor was designed for the road and the other two are desert sleds. Nevertheless, the fundamental differences in the engines are apparent. They're all 30-something horsepower, but the Velo and BSA rev quicker whereas the Vincent feels more like a locomotive. The yin and yang of big 4-stroke singles ...

The Meteor is equipped with both a compression release and

a choke lever, but I've found that neither is needed for starting. After freeing the clutch plates by kicking it a few times in neutral with the clutch lever held in, I put it in second gear, roll the bike backwards against compression, select neutral, tickle the carb and give it a kick. She usually starts first kick.

The Meteor is an easy bike to ride, but it's a machine that doesn't like to be rushed. It prefers the throttle be rolled open and closed without abrupt changes, and the gearbox is happiest when the selector is nudged, not forced. She's pretty smooth for a big single — probably due to the narrow and extremely rigid bottom end. The bike builds speed steadily and feels well-composed up to 80mph or so. At this early stage of our relationship, I have too much mechanical sympathy to give it full beans — I'm not in that much of a hurry to get anywhere (Sorry, Sid!).

The ride is much more compliant than I expected it to be. Steering is light and nimble and the Brampton forks soak up the bumps quite well. The brakes are about what you'd expect from 7-inch drums. They will retard one's progress, but not with great urgency. The brakes are the same as on the much heavier twins, so the singles do come to a stop more quickly than their bigger siblings. This is the first bike I've owned with a Smiths Chronometric speedometer — what a marvelously complicated device! I love watching the clockwork needle tick up and down with changes in speed.

Looking down the road

Sid wouldn't approve of his bike being put on a pedestal or displayed as some sort of icon. He'd want the Meteor to be ridden, as Vincents were intended to be. When components break or wear out, I'll fix or replace them, but the bike won't be restored. I plan to keep the Meteor as Big Sid set it up and enjoy riding it as often as I can.

Sid expressed his attitude towards Vincent ownership this way: "You have a rare gift to look after and enjoy, quite like a high-strung racehorse — or a lovely child. She will need your constant attention to her needs and well-being to stay healthy. Give her a carefully chosen name. And love." Roger that, Sid.

Riding a well-sorted Vincent under any circumstances is a rare privilege, guaranteed to improve your outlook. Big Sid's Meteor doesn't look or sound like any other Vincent single — it's a unique testament to the vision of a special man. I can't imagine a more satisfying riding experience than sitting astride Big Sid's Meteor, my hands on the grips he held and my feet on the footpegs where his size 15EEEs used to be. **MC**



Former sidecar racer and frame builder Colin Seeley at our show with Randy Baxter's Seeley-framed Triumph Trident.

BARBER 2018

Colin Seeley at the 14th Annual Vintage Festival

Story by Richard Backus

Photos by Richard Backus and Corey Levenson

Another record is in the books following the 14th Annual Barber Vintage Festival, Oct. 5-7, with event organizer ZOOM Motorsports pegging total attendance at just under 80,000. This year's festival actually felt smaller to us than the last two, but whatever the case there's no questioning Barber's status as the biggest vintage motorcycle event in the U.S., with more going on than you can hope to take in during the three-day festival. Event Grand Marshal Colin Seeley was hosted at Friday night's Motorcycles by Moonlight museum fundraiser, and he graciously made time to swing by the *Motorcycle Classics* tent on Saturday, sharing stories of his remarkable career in sidecar racing and frame building with the crowd gathered for our show awards ceremony.

Seeley presented our Best Triple award, honoring the 3-cylinder offerings from Triumph/BSA that were introduced in 1968, which appropriately enough went to Triumph specialist Randy Baxter for his fantastic circa-1973 Seeley-framed Triumph Trident, one of only three or four made by Seeley. Visibly moved by the warm and enthusiastic reception of fans, the humble Seeley seemed truly amazed at just how revered he is in the classic bike community.

The Triumph/BSA triple contingent was predictably strong, with numerous Tridents and Rocket 3s on hand, including the surprise visit of Team Obsolete's ex-Dick Mann BSA Rocket 3. The Barber Museum's Brian Slark and the National Motorcycle Museum's Mark Mederski once again helped with judging.

Our Editors' Choice award went to Frank Lipinski, who showed his unrestored 1982 Triumph Royal, one of only 50 made. The next day, Lipinski rode the Royal on our Sunday Morning Ride, and afterward, apparently taking leave of his senses, encouraged me



All but two of the 46 bikes in our show were running riders! Left to right from top: Randy Baxter gets a push firing up his Seeley-framed Trident — what a glorious noise!; Frank Lipinski, Editors' Choice, 1982 Triumph T140ES Royal; Rick Schaeffer, Best Restored British, 1937 Triumph Tiger 90; Dana Narkunas, Best Restored European, 1980 Laverda Jota; Best Rider European went to Chelle Fritz and her dad, Skip, who restored Skip's dad's 300,000-plus mile, owned from new 1976 BMW R90S; Kim and Tom Shipp, Best Restored American, 1970 Harley-Davidson Sprint SS350; Gary Gornati, Best Restored Japanese, 1986 Yamaha FZ750; Donnie Ables, Best Rider Japanese, 1978 Kawasaki KZ650R; Shad Alexander, Best Custom, 1980 Honda CX500C.

to take it for a spin. Often maligned, the Meriden-built Triumphs were and are great motorcycles, with loads of torque and a fabulous, throaty roar emanating from their twin pipes. I didn't want to hand it back.

Our technical seminars included an examination of vintage Japanese electrical systems led by Rick Shaw of Rick's Motorsport Electrics, and an inside look at vintage motorcycle suspensions with Matt Wiley of Race Tech Suspension. As always there was great AHRMA road racing on the 2.4-mile Barber track, along with AHRMA vintage motocross and trials racing in the surrounding woods of the 740-acre Barber Motorsports Park. This year's swap meet was the biggest yet, expanding into the Porsche Sport Driving School and Mercedes Benz Proving Grounds, and the variety of parts and complete bikes for sale — ranging from fresh field finds to restored runners — was simply amazing. The Ace Corner returned to Turn 17, and the AMCA and VJMC held their annual

shows off the perimeter road across from the museum.

Bonhams held its first-ever Barber auction in the museum on Saturday, selling the featured ex-Steve McQueen 1970 Husqvarna 400 Cross for an astounding \$230,500. A spectacular and rare 1928 Windhoff powered by an overhead cam, 746cc inline four sold for the same money, but the auction headliner, the second Vincent Black Lightning built, failed to find a new owner.

The Barber Vintage Festival is always something of a pinch-me event. Did all that really happen? Did I really meet and talk to famed frame builder Colin Seeley? Did I really ride a perfect 1982 Triumph Bonneville Royal? Did I really hang out with former Ducati-riding 1977 Daytona Superbike winner Cook Neilson? Yeah, I really did, and you might have, too, if you'd been there.

Special thanks to sponsors Spectro Performance Oils, Pecard Leather Care, S100 and Hagerty Motorcycle Insurance for helping to make it all happen. See you next year. **MC**



Fanciful Aqua-Naught tripped up viewers (left). Team Obsolete's incredible ex-Dick Mann BSA Rocket 3 is history on wheels.



Riders hang out before suiting up for our Sunday Morning Ride with sponsor Hagerty Motorcycle Insurance.



Rick's Motorsport Electrics' Rick Shaw explaining vintage Japanese electrics (left); \$3,500 coffin-tank Triumph in the swap meet.



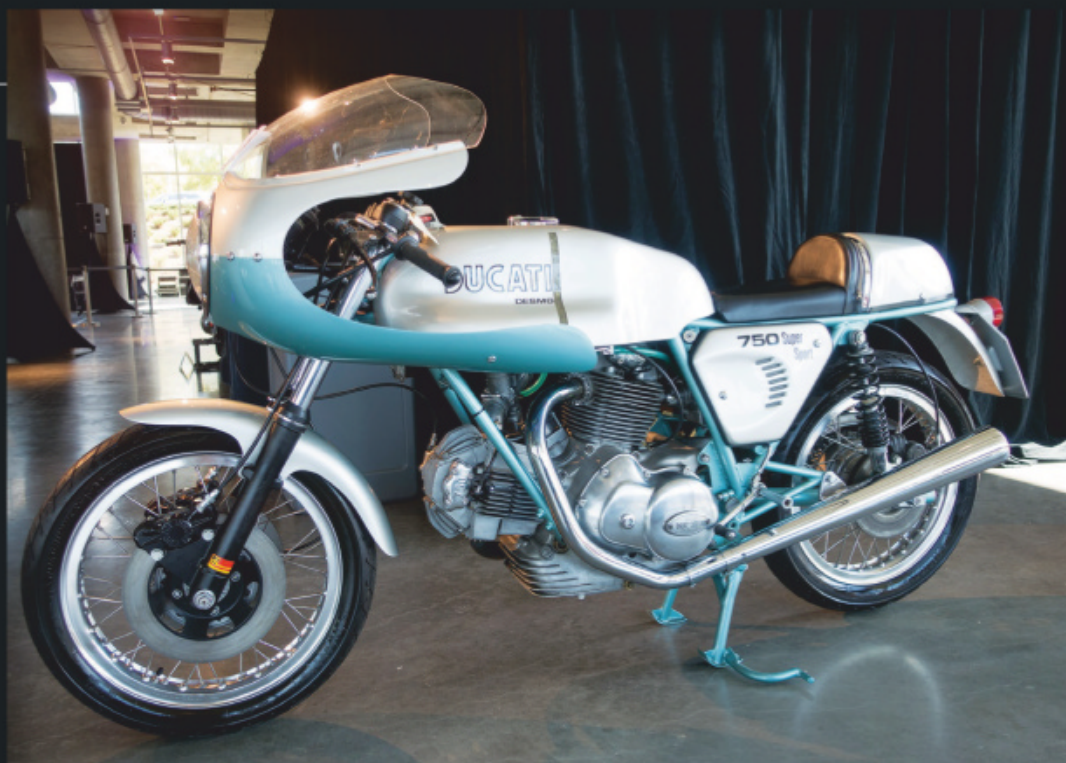
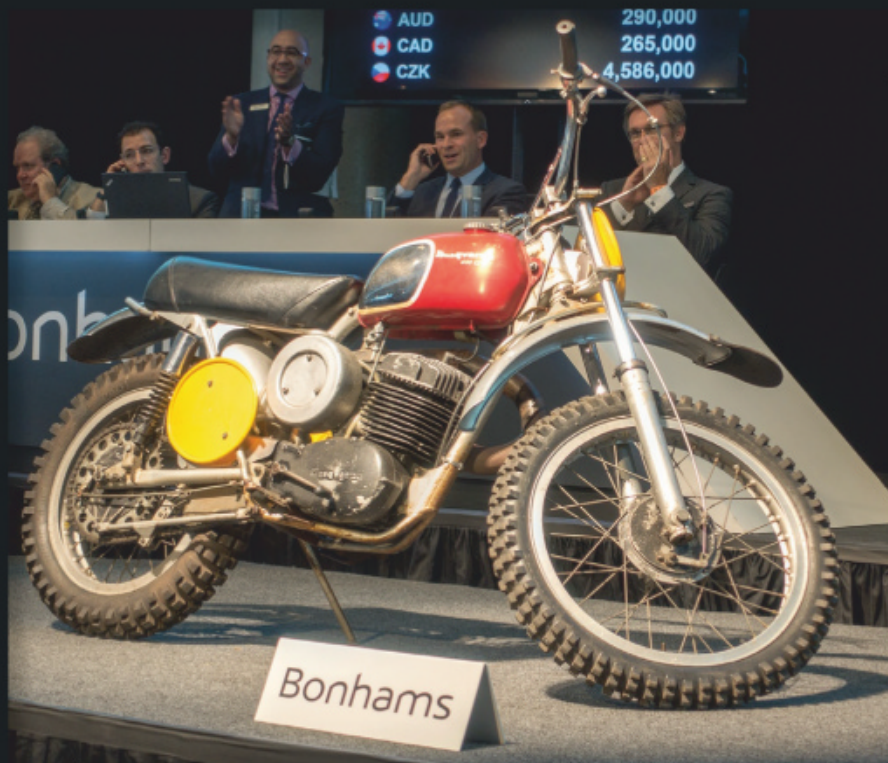
Nice Vincent Grey Flash replicas in the paddock (left), and a rare sight anywhere, a Douglas twin offered at the swap meet.



Want a fast Honda Monkey bike (left)? Put a CB350F 4-cylinder in it! Have you ever actually seen anyone ride a Honda Motocompo? The smile says it all (middle). Lewis Meyer with his original — "it's had a couple cables replaced" — running, 1923 Ner-A-Car (right). Said Lewis of the single rear brake after almost hitting our tent, "It's inadequate and awkward to operate."



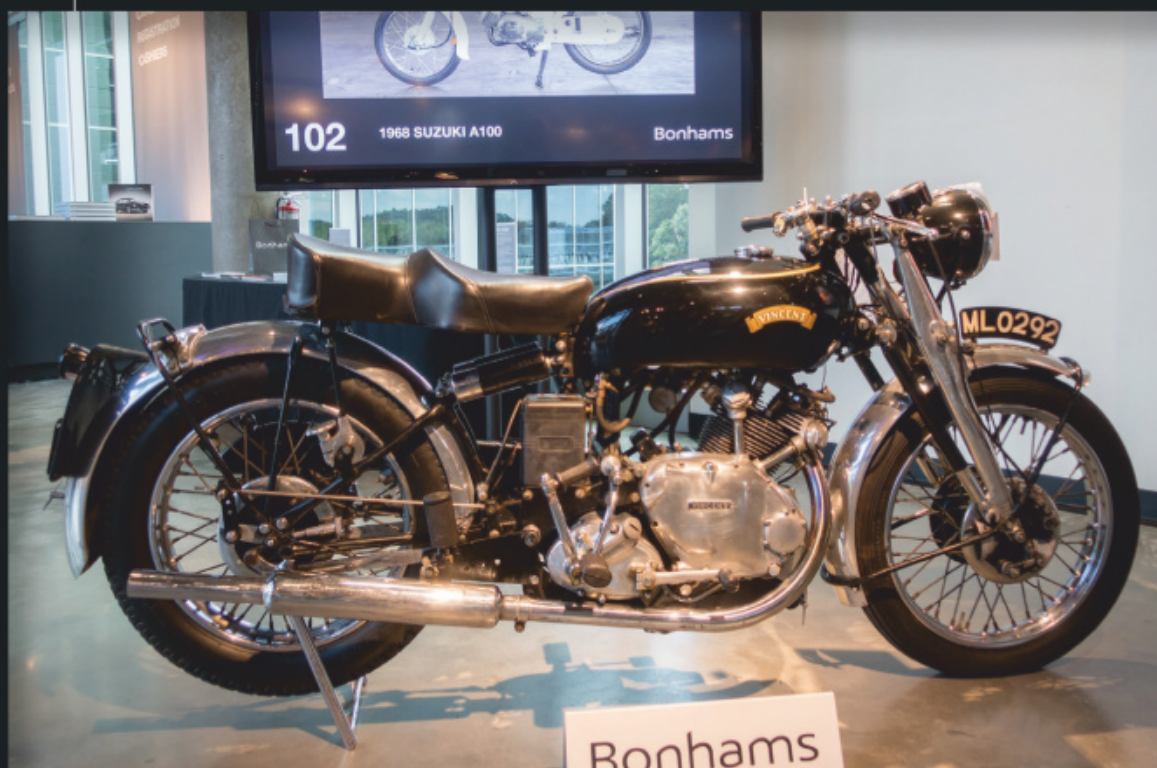
Nice lineup of vintage Japanese bikes at the VJMC show area included a pair of very clean CB350F Fours flanking a CL450 twin.



Steve McQueen's 1970 Husqvarna 400 Cross (left), which he rode in Bruce Brown's *On Any Sunday*, sold for an incredible \$230,500 at Bonhams' Barber auction. A restored 1974 Ducati 750SS went for \$137,000. (All prices include buyer's premium.)



Powered by a water-cooled 2-stroke square four, this 1984 Buell RW750 (left), the second Buell ever and the first sold to a customer, went for \$60,000. Original condition, 5,000-mile Honda VFR750R/RC30 sold for \$27,025.



A 1953 Vincent Comet briefly owned by Steve McQueen went for \$63,250 (left) and one of his old Bell helmets commanded \$21,875. A "pudding basin" helmet worn by Mike Hailwood (right) went for \$3,750; a set of his leathers fetched \$16,875.

YOUR **TRUSTED** ONE-STOP SOURCE FOR **PARTS** **AND** **ACCESSORIES**

DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FOR **50 YEARS** AND COUNTING

50 YEARS

DENNIS
KIRK
WE SHIP TODAY

HUGE INVENTORY



HUGE TIRE SELECTION



NEED A PLACE TO SHOW OFF YOUR BIKE?



GARAGE BUILD

BUILD IT  SHARE IT

GARAGEBUILD.COM

SUBMIT YOUR BUILD, RATE YOUR
FAVORITES, ENTER TO WIN PRIZES

**OUTSTANDING
CUSTOMER SERVICE**

**BIZRATE
SCORE OF
9.3 OUT OF 10**

**FREE
SHIPPING**

ON ORDERS
OVER \$89 TO THE
LOWER 48 STATES

**RISK-FREE
SHOPPING**

**FREE RETURNS
ON HELMETS
& APPAREL**

**SAME DAY
SHIPPING**

ON ORDERS
PLACED BEFORE
8PM CST

denniskirk.com • 800-970-3819
M-F 7am-8pm CST SAT-SUN 7am-6pm CST



MEMORY MAKER

1968 Honda CL350

Story by Margie Siegal
Photos by Nick Cedar

In February 1968, Honda released two versions of its new overhead cam 350cc twin — the scrambler-styled CL and the CB road bike — and they immediately started selling in large numbers. Estimates vary, but it's believed that around 650,000 Honda 350s were sold worldwide during the six years that all variants of the model were in production. Decades later, an amazing number have survived, even after being put away wet — or being left out on the street and not put away at all.

The key to the 350's reliability and longevity was over-engineering. In 1968, *Cycle* magazine took its test 350 to a shop in Pennsylvania for a teardown, and the editors were duly impressed by the engine's four huge crankshaft main bearings, bearing supports and its massive flywheels, details that minimized vibration. The single overhead camshaft itself weighed 3 pounds, *Cycle* deeming it "a paragon of strength."

Back in 1968, most motorcycles needed frequent attention to run well. The Honda 350, on the other hand, was designed for easy maintenance, enhancing the probability that owners would actually make the effort to keep their bike in top running condition. Contemporary reports noted the easy-to-adjust valves, the quick-disconnects dotting the electrical system, and the reliable carburetors. Many contemporary bikes of equivalent displacement were equipped with only the most basic equipment, but the Honda had turn signals, a push-button starter backed up with a kickstarter, and a reasonably effective double-leading-shoe drum front brake.

Testers were impressed by the little bike's performance. The scrambler-styled CL350 pulled from 3,000rpm and would rev to 9,500rpm, thanks to progressively wound valve springs and a carefully engineered induction tract. The road version, the CB350, would rev to 10,500rpm. A "small" bike with a 5-speed gearbox was also newsworthy in the late Sixties, a time when many two-wheelers were still limited to a 4-speed transmission, and testers noted the smooth clutch and easy-to-shift transmission. The handling of Japanese-built motorcycles, including this Honda, was not the best in this era, and testers noted that the 350 "steered somewhat ponderously." Yet contemporary riders gladly took reliability, easy starting and oil-tight cases over great handling, and the 350 sold like hotcakes.





1968 HONDA CL350K1

Engine: 325cc air-cooled SOHC parallel twin, 64mm x 50.6mm bore and stroke, 9.5:1 compression ratio, 33hp @ 9,500rpm

Top speed: 102mph (period test)

Carburetion: Two 32mm Keihin CV

Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, coil and breaker points ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Single downtube cradle/52in (1,321mm)

Suspension: Telescopic fork front, dual shocks w/ adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 6.3in (160mm) TLS drum front, 5.3in (135mm) SLS drum rear

Tires: 3 x 19in front, 3.5 x 18in rear

Weight (dry): 345.4lb (157kg)

Seat height: 31.3in (795mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 2.4gal (9ltr)/50mpg (est.)

Price then (1968)/now: \$700/\$700-\$2,500



The 350 Hondas were built until 1974, when Honda announced the CB360 and CL360 models. Between the introduction of the 350s in 1968 and the last year of production in 1973, Honda's mid-sized twin introduced many folks to the wonderful world of motorcycles, creating a host of memories in the process.

Kelly Ford's CL350

One of the people with fond memories of the Honda 350 is Kelly Ford, who was lucky enough to be born into a motorcycling family. "When I was 6 years old, I woke up on my birthday and heard a motorcycle start in the driveway. I

ran out, and there was my father with my birthday present, a Honda 50. It was love at first sight." After outgrowing the Honda 50, Kelly had a CL350, a bike that introduced some unique experiences. "I was riding around the dirt lanes between farmers' fields with

my cousin on the back," Kelly remembers, "and this dog started chasing us. Well, the dog ran in front of me and I hit him and went over the handlebars. The bike was still upright and my cousin grabbed the bars and rode the bike into a ditch. He tipped over into the grass. The forks were messed up, but there wasn't a scratch on the rest of the bike."

Kelly eventually ended up with a Kawasaki 2-stroke, and just as eventually, got married and started a family. He still





rode — and fast. “I was doing crazy stuff on the Kawasaki, and there was an incident where some milk bottles fell off a truck in front of me. I went home and told my wife about it. She said that with a baby son, I needed to stay off that bike, so I stopped riding.” But then the baby grew up and bought a Shovelhead Harley-Davidson. “I was inspired to buy a Harley of my own,” Kelly says. “I figured I wouldn’t do all that crazy stuff on the Harley. My wife called it my redheaded mistress.”

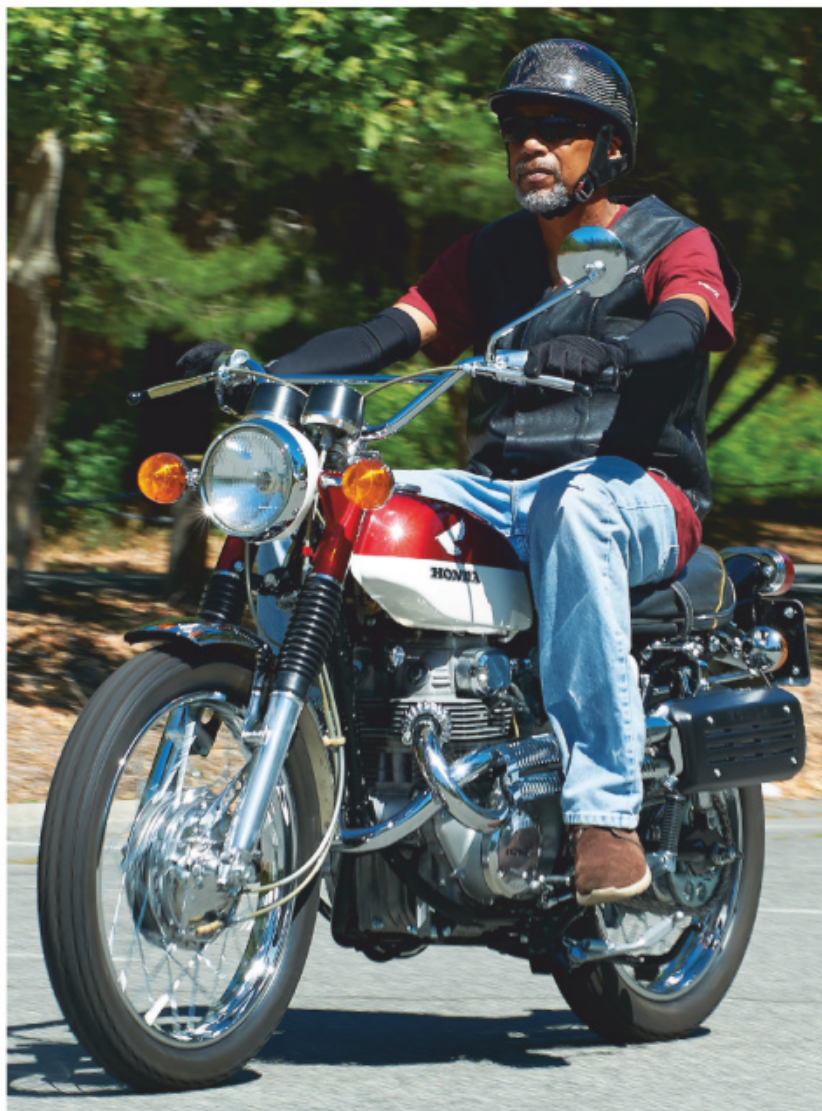
Kelly worked for 35 years for the father of Japanese motorcycle enthusiast Trace St. Germain. Trace served a stint in the military before he went to work for his father, and when he got out he built a couple of motorcycles for friends. That experience started Trace on the path to doing restorations professionally. “I’ve always been mechanical, and restoring motorcycles makes me happy. I like taking things apart,” Trace says. Kelly met Trace while working for his father and they became buddies, their mutual interests including motorized two-wheelers, and Kelly would sometimes look for bikes that Trace could buy cheaply and restore.

Trace retired in 2011. “I was bored and going nuts, so I

started restoring and rebuilding bikes as a business.” At first, most of the bikes Trace took on were big-bore Japanese machines. “A friend challenged me to do a smaller bike. I found a Honda 90 to restore, and ended up selling that 90 to Honda Motor Corporation for one of their museums.”

Meanwhile, Kelly started having medical issues and was put on the list for a heart transplant. “He was on the waiting list for a while,” Trace says. “There were two false alarms where he thought he was getting a heart, but ended up not. The third time, he was in the hospital, and it was clear he was not going anywhere until he got the heart.”

Too weak to ride the Harley, Kelly passed the time by looking for restoration projects on eBay and Craigslist. “I saw this CL, and it brought back a flood of memories.” He called the seller, who turned out to be the son of the original owner and was actually trying to value the machine, not sell it. “He told me that I was the first guy who called with a story about why I wanted it. Everyone else just asked him how much he wanted for it.” After discussing the bike with Kelly and learning he wanted to restore it and keep it, not sell it, the owner decided



Owner Kelly Ford aboard his low-mile CL350. Amazingly, the paint on the tank and sidecovers is original.



The sticker on the right side cover is from Nelson Bros. Motorcycles in Oakland, California. The seat is original.

to sell it to Kelly after all. The CL, a low number 1968 model, had 941 original miles on it, and had sat for almost 50 years.

The restoration

"I bought the bike in December and delivered it to Trace. I wasn't out of Trace's driveway before the bike started coming apart, and a few days later I ended up in the hospital," Kelly says. With Kelly out, the bike's seller stepped in to help, picking up parts from the plater and bringing them to Trace. "This was a three-way restoration: me, Trace and Eric, the guy who sold me the bike. The three of us became friends."

Kelly received a new heart just in time, and while he was recuperating from surgery Trace gave him regular reports on the Honda's restoration progress, but refused to send him photos so he would have a surprise when he finally got out of the hospital.

All of the CL's parts were there, but so was a lot of rust, especially on the frame, which was losing its paint. Trace ended up painting the frame, along with the engine side covers, and getting a lot of the nuts and bolts re-zinc-plated. Incredibly, the original inner tubes and tires were still holding air, so Trace used them. Even more amazing, the original paint on the gas tank needed only cleaning and polish.

Given the popularity of 350 Hondas, many parts are still available, but not all. For instance, the carburetors on this bike were the early version of the Keihin constant velocity carbs, and they have square floats. Unlike the later version with round floats, bowl gaskets are no longer available, and Trace had to repair one float because the square floats are no longer available at "a reasonable price."

Although Trace didn't disassemble the engine, he carefully cleaned every bit of it. "I used a time-consuming, but very



For now, the bike still wears its original Bridgestone tires, along with the original inner tubes, which still hold air!



effective process, soaking the cases in vinegar and scrubbing them. The cylinders and heads came out looking good, but the cases aren't perfect; they look a little stained. I also used vinegar to clean the inside of the gas tank, which looks brand-new now."

One item that's hard to replace is the seat cover, as new covers that look exactly like the original Honda seat covers are not available. Trace and Kelly lucked out, however, as the seat on this bike was in perfect condition. "The foam is a little crushed," Trace says, "but I am scared to take the cover off."

At some point, a friend of the owner had tried to hot-wire the bike, but outside of some damage done by the hot-wiring attempt and a little surface corrosion, the wiring system was in great shape and Trace says that the wiring harness was easily repaired. Trace also replaced the rubber grips, the rubber handlebar mounts, the rubbers on the footpegs, the fork seals and the chain. The rear shock springs looked great on the top, hidden under the chrome cover next to the bike, but were marginal on the bottom, so Trace simply flipped the springs around.

Trace finished the bike just before Kelly got out of the hospital. "Trace wouldn't send me photos. He brought it to the Quail Gathering in Carmel, California, for me, and I rode across the grass for the first time there. He wanted it to be a surprise, so I

"He wanted it to be a surprise, so I had no idea what it looked like."

had no idea what it looked like. It was really cool. I wanted the bike to be ready for Quail, which was my first weekend out of the hospital." Trace has ridden the 350 and says that "it has a lot of giddyup, even though the rings are leaking and compression is just over minimum specs. I had it up to 75mph."

With Kelly back in the hospital before the next show, Trace brought it and displayed it. "Trace brought it back to his house and I rode it home. It is so much lighter than the Harley! Riding it felt great. People were honking at me, giving me the thumbs-up. At shows, people come over and tell me how a 350 was their first bike and how much they appreciate me bringing it out," Kelly says.

With show season over, Kelly has to make some decisions. Although he does not yet have the upper body strength to ride his Harley, he is physically able to ride the Honda. But if he decides to really ride the Honda, he knows that he'll have to replace the original, now 51-year-old tires. And Trace, concerned about the rings, would like to do a top end job. Otherwise, Kelly will keep the CL350 as a show bike and concentrate on physical therapy so he can get back on his Harley.

"Now I have something to get well for, and a new friend in Eric, the former owner, all thanks to looking for motorcycles on Craigslist." **MC**

MINIATURE MARVEL

Inside Ducati's 125cc GP four

Story by Hamish Cooper
Photos by Phil Aynsley

One of the most intriguing chapters in the history of multi-cylinder Grand Prix racing is Ducati's 125cc 4-cylinder. First sketched out on paper by Fabio Taglioni in the 1950s, then half-heartedly developed to a semi-prototype stage in 1958, the project was revived in 1965.

It underwent a year of testing and development, but was never raced. After being sent around the motorcycle show circuit it mysteriously disappeared. In 1989 the engine was discovered in Latvia and later the frame uncovered in Yugoslavia. In 2000 the machine was restored back to original condition and it now resides in the Morbidelli Museum in Pesaro, Italy.

What were the circumstances that led to its creation? What made it so special in Ducati's history but so quickly forgotten? Was it a potential world beater?

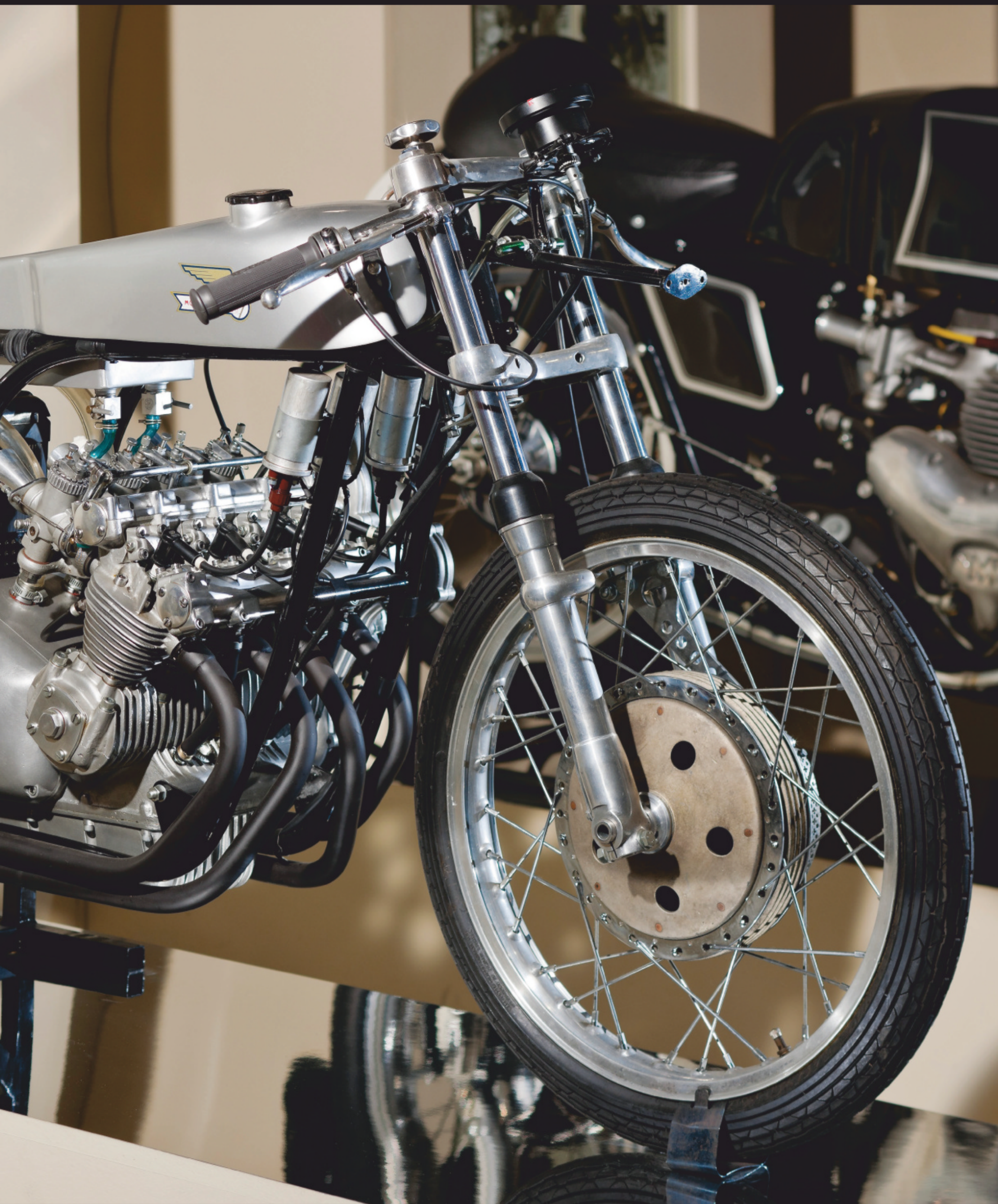
A pure racer

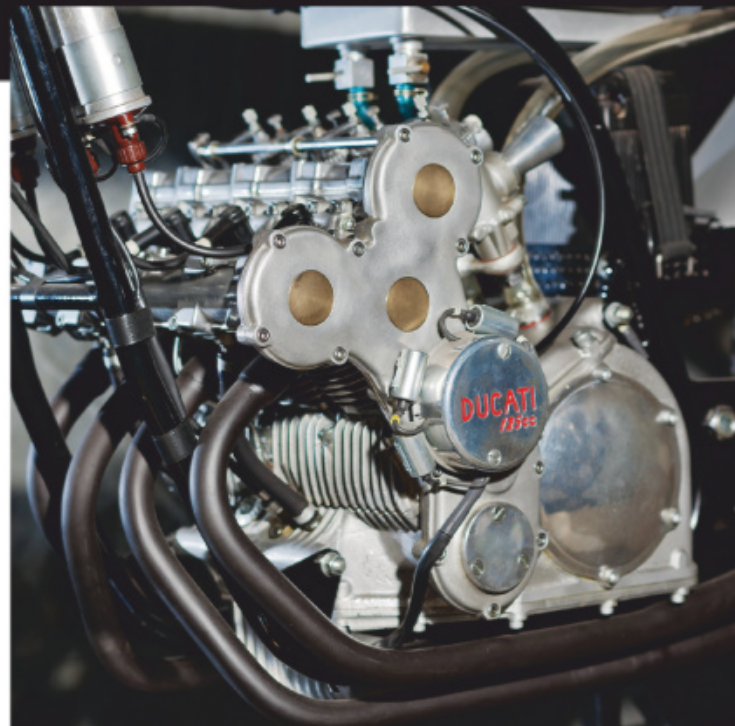
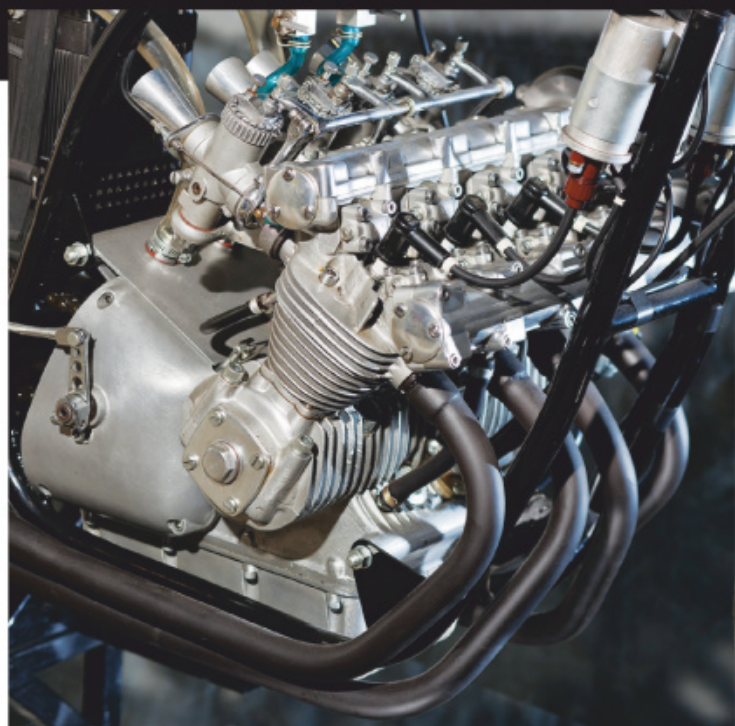
There are several fascinating aspects to the 125cc 4-cylinder. The most significant is that it was designed purely for racing and bore no resemblance to any production Ducati. This showed Ducati's clear intent to break away from production-based racing, which had set it on a path to worldwide sales success, and chase Grand Prix glory. Ducati was hoping to up the stakes with a clean-sheet design.

Ducati's timing with its original foray into building a 125cc multi couldn't have been worse. To begin with, Fiat's introduction of the affordable Fiat 500 car was crippling domestic motorcycle sales, then, at the end of 1957 Italian Grand Prix powerhouses Gilera, Moto Guzzi and Mondial announced they would withdraw from world championship racing, altering the face of Italian competition. Although Ducati achieved GP wins with its 125cc single in 1958, with Ducati riders finishing second and third in the championship and the factory second in the constructors' championship, the 125cc 4-cylinder project was dropped, and Ducati went into a kind of domestic hibernation while it concentrated on selling existing models into new export markets.

So instead of Ducati being the first manufacturer to enter a 4-cylinder 4-stroke into the 125cc Grand Prix class, that honor fell to Honda, with the RC146 in 1963. The Japanese giant began a period where multi-cylinder 4-strokes







competed against 2-strokes from both Japan and Europe. It could so easily have been a little Italian company that started this revolution instead of the evolving giant that was Honda.

Fast forward to the mid-1960s. Spain's Mototrans, a Ducati affiliate, had become one of Spain's "big three" motorcycle manufacturers, joining Montesa and Bultaco. Cashed-up Mototrans urged Ducati to build a 125cc multi-cylinder to replace Ducati's existing twin, which used a three-camshaft design with desmodromic valve operation. The twin had first seen the light of day

in 1958 and had been raced by Mototrans throughout the 1960s. The relationship was so close that Ducati had sent several of its factory riders over to race those twins in Spain to ensure championship results.

The theory that created the birth of an amazing prototype was that a higher-revving multi-cylinder could produce more than the 24 horsepower at 15,000rpm of the twin. Unlike Ducati's original 4-cylinder strategy, the intention this time was to race the new bike in the Spanish domestic championship with the

Inside the Morbidelli Museum

Giancarlo Morbidelli's life story is a classic rags-to-riches saga worthy of Hollywood, an archetype of the breed of self-made men from humble backgrounds who turned provincial Italy into the mainstay of the country's economy in the 1960s and 1970s.

Morbidelli was born in 1934 into a family of farmers, and started work at age 16 as an apprentice fitter in a factory making woodworking machinery for the furniture industry, one of the two

engineering specialties of his hometown of Pesaro, on the Adriatic Coast just south of Rimini. The other? Motorcycles.

Morbidelli started his own woodworking company in the late 1950s, but applying his innate technical brilliance to tune locally built Benelli and Motobi bikes to a succession of race victories was his relief from the punishing days spent building Morbidelli Woodworking Machines into the industry world leader it would become by the 1980s.

Like many a race fan, Giancarlo's ambition was to go racing with a bike bearing his own name. Yet even for someone with his resources, the results of his efforts were awesome — especially given the modest nature of his homespun team. All the Morbidelli GP racers, from the first Italian title-winning rotary-valve 50cc tiddler built in 1969, were constructed from top to bottom in a corner of their patron's Pesaro woodworking machinery factory, even down



One wing of the museum is dedicated to Morbidelli race bikes. Giancarlo Morbidelli and his Morbidelli V8 sport tourer.

The 125 GP during restoration at the Morbidelli museum in Pesaro, Italy (right). The four condensers on the outside of the points case (middle left).

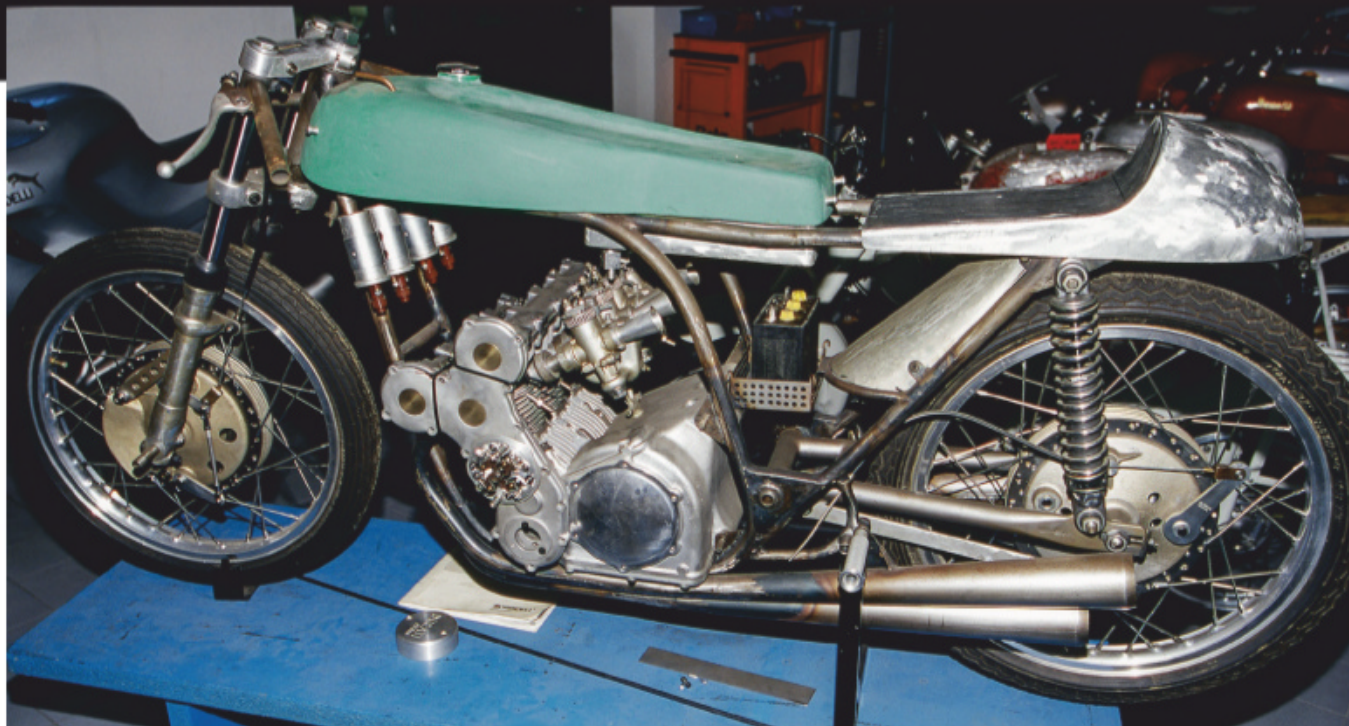
goal of knocking Bultaco's new TSS 2-stroke off the podium. If it worked there, then maybe the project could be brought across to the world Grand Prix championship.

And so, Fabio Taglioni dusted off his original plans and reworked the design into a little gem of a racer. Sadly, it had one major flaw.

A close look

Before we reveal its Achilles' heel, let's examine the 125 in detail. At 12.6 inches (320mm), the across-the-frame 4-cylinder was barely wider than Ducati's earlier twin. It weighed just 187 pounds (85 kilograms) without its fairing, about the same as Ducati's 125cc desmo single-cylinder GP racer of the late-1950s.

The compact engine design meant there wasn't enough room to fit Taglioni's preferred desmo valve operation inside the new



racer. Instead, the double overhead cam heads ran four valves per cylinder — the first time Taglioni had publicly produced an engine so equipped — operated by conventional springs. The 16-valve engine had a barely over-square bore and stroke of 34.5mm by 34mm, encouraging high revs. A further indication of the engine's compactness was the fact that special, very small 8mm spark plugs had to be manufactured to light the fire owing to the lack of room upstairs.

The cams were driven by a series of gears that ran up the left

to the wooden patterns to make the engine castings. An accomplished, self-taught engineer, Giancarlo did much of the design work himself. Rotary-valve Morbidelli motorcycles contested every GP class from 50 to 500cc at various times between 1969 and 1982, winning six Riders World Championships under the Morbidelli or customer Morbidelli Benelli Armi banners.

In 1994, Morbidelli displayed his prototype design for the ultimate sport touring bike, the water-cooled, four-cam, 32-valve, 847cc Morbidelli V8.

Sadly, only a prototype and three production bikes were ever built before the project came to a stop in 1998, after Morbidelli sold his woodworking business. The new owners had no interest in motorcycles.

Although retired, Morbidelli's continuing passion for motorcycles pushed him to open the Morbidelli Museum in the former Morbidelli factory in Pesaro, Italy. In 1999 he opened the doors to the public, displaying his rapidly growing collection of historic motorcycles, most of them restored by Morbidelli

and his team. Although Italian sport and racing machinery takes pride of place — there's an incredible presentation of Morbidelli race bikes in a special side alcove — the 400-strong collection represents bikes from around the world, including special prototypes and other one-offs.

The museum is generally open on Saturday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., and you can arrange an after-hours visit through the museum website at museomorbidelli.it — *Alan Cathcart, with Richard Backus*



side of the engine behind an elegant Y-shaped cowling, and the cylinders were inclined forward 40 degrees, with deep fins on the front to aid air cooling. A squish-band, a compression ratio of 12:1 (high for the day) and forged pistons helped balance reliability with performance. Safe peak revs were 17,000rpm, with peak power arriving at 14,000rpm. This was later increased to 15,000rpm.

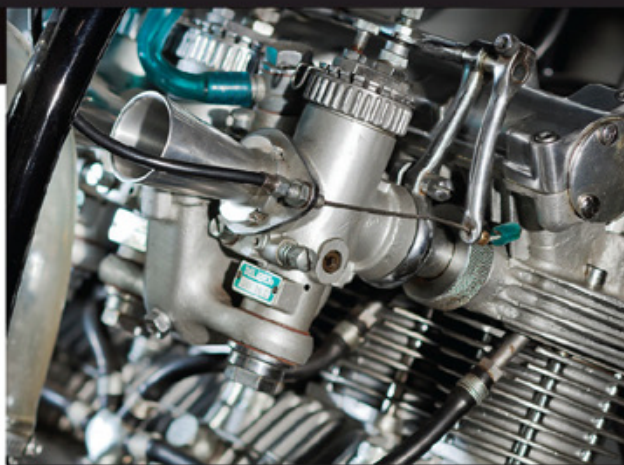
Taglioni's 125cc four wasn't some cobbled-together prototype, but a beautifully assembled miniature marvel featuring exquisite castings and a general design flair that is breathtaking, even by today's standards of technology. It obviously wasn't some "laboratory racer," a machine thrown together using a mix of existing and experimental parts. It was in fact a completely new race bike with production-line quality in its execution.

Yet despite its incredible design, its main flaw was that for all its sophistication — which in the end equals cost — it wasn't any more powerful than Ducati's existing twin-cylinder. Another issue was ignition. Initially, it had four ignition coils mounted on the front downtubes of the cradle frame, as can be seen in the restored version. The coils were powered by a battery mounted behind the engine, and four condensers were fitted to the outside of the points plate cover at the bottom of the Y-shaped cam-drive cowling. A more compact Marelli system running just two coils was tried later, but getting a reliable spark at high revs was an ongoing challenge.

Carburetion was via a bank of four tiny 12mm Dell-Ortos, with two specially made oblong float chambers fitted between each pair of carburetors. The wet-sump engine ran an 8-speed gearbox, with geared primary drive to the multi-plate clutch. Sturdy 32mm Ceriani front forks, Oldani brakes and 18-inch wheels were typical period GP cycle parts.

On track

Legendary Ducati tester and tuner Franco Farne undertook the 125's first testing at Modena in early 1965, and the bike's potential looked encouraging. However, it needed more power. To be competitive in the 125cc world championship in 1965, it would have had to exceed the 31 horsepower of that season's world 125cc champion, Hugh Anderson, riding a 2-stroke twin-cylinder Suzuki. The Ducati, although some 5 kilos lighter, was down on the Suzuki by a whopping



1965 DUCATI 125GP FOUR

Engine: 125cc air-cooled DOHC 4 valves per cylinder inline four, 34.5mm x 34mm bore and stroke, 12:1 compression ratio, 23hp @ 15,000rpm

Top speed: 125mph

Carburetion: Four 12mm Dell'Orto (originally; 16mm now fitted), twin floats/one per pair of carburetors

Transmission: 8-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 6v battery, coil and breaker point ignition x 4

Frame: Dual downtube cradle steel

Suspension: 32mm Ceriani telescopic fork front, dual shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: Oldani TLS drum front, SLS drum rear

Tires: 2.5 x 18in front and rear

Weight (dry/minus fairing): 187lb (85kg)

7 horsepower. Yet even after a year of development, including trying 2-valve heads instead of 4-valve heads, no significant power increase was found and any thoughts of transferring the project over to the world championship were soon forgotten. The project was shelved and never even raced in the Spanish championship. After making the rounds of Europe's motorcycle shows, the 125 four disappeared.

However, in 1989, Giancarlo Morbidelli, the owner and founder of Morbidelli motorcycles, recovered the missing pieces, locating the engine in Latvia and the frame in Yugoslavia. His company had a huge interest in 125cc GP history, having won the 125cc world championship in 1975, 1976 and 1977,

hence his interest in this unique piece of Ducati history. Once in Morbidelli's possession, the Ducati was painstakingly restored back to its original specification.

This little chapter in Ducati's history is actually retold in the Morbidelli museum, not in Ducati's. It shows the effort an inspirational engineer, with a small team of like-minded followers and the backing of Mototrans, one of Ducati's major corporate partners of the period, was prepared to expend on a project that promised the world — but quickly hit a dead end. **MC**



Giancarlo Morbidelli (left) and photographer Phil Aynsley with the 125GP four.

Counteract

Motorcycle Balancing

Increase of 0.7hp and 1.1 ft-lb of torque just by balancing your tires with Counteract!



Ready Balance Tubes

Counteract's Ready Balance Tubes are the world's first all in one complete wheel assembly balancing inner tube for motorcycles!



DIY Kits

Our 'Do It Yourself' Kits, come with everything you need to balance your motorcycle tires in the comfort of your own garage or driveway!



Service Packs

Our Motorcycle Balancing Service Packs contain pre-measured application bags in bulk quantities!

www.bikebeads.com
1-800-572-8952

Number One in Italian motorcycle parts!

39,000 different parts always on stock
for Moto Guzzi & Ducati from 1970 on



OUR LOCAL
MOTO GUZZI PARTNER:

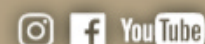


601 Ogden Ave,
Albany, WI. 53502 USA
+1 608-862-2300
info@mgcycle.com



Stein-Dinse GmbH
Waller See 11 • 38179 Braunschweig, Germany
Tel: 0049 531 123300-0 • info@stein-dinse.com

Your Contact:
Benedikt Viro
0049 531 123 300 41
bviro@stein-dinse.com



Visit us:
www.stein-dinse.com





WHEELS & WAVES


Why did the motorbikes cross the lake?
To get to the other ride.

Story by John L. Stein
Photos by Seth DeDoes

There it was. Just another old Craigslist motorboat. Faded and forlorn, a 1970 Chrysler Sport Fury lazing in an equally fusty dirt lot, its formerly gleaming Pirates Gold, 16-foot hull chalky and dull, its interior moldy, and its 85 horsepower Magnaforce outboard engine entangled in creeping vines. Once a catalyst for family fun, it was now neglected and needy, like a dusty, swaybacked nag. Its time, quite sadly, had passed. Or had it?

I'm a hard-ass in some ways; a vigorous competitor in the waves, on the track and in defending moral principle. But I'm a total softy when it comes to those suffering undeserved misfortune ... and also neglected machinery. I fell in love. I opened my wallet. I bought it.

Superficially, I had merely fallen for a needy boat. But I soon became infatuated that the boat, engine and trailer were all produced by mighty Chrysler Corp. during its 1965-1984 dalliance with America's recreational boom. What other car company had the stones to do that? Most importantly, though, I liked its shape. Hardly beautiful by marine design standards, Chrysler's "Cathedral Hull" runabouts debuted for 1969 promising superb stability, affable ride and handling, great value and roomy interiors. And it was this last asset, the generous floor area, that hooked me, because the Sport Fury's cockpit, measuring over 6 feet long and 5 feet wide, looked similar to a pickup bed in size,



An odd dream realized.
Left to right: 1970 Honda
CT90, 1969 Honda
Motosport 90 (aka SL90),
and a 1970 Chrysler Sport
Fury motorboat.

which, as every hillbilly knows, is just right for carrying dirt bikes. “Huh,” I thought. “Dirt bikes in a boat ...”

A spacey odyssey

If an asteroid can hurtle through space for 4.6 billion years before igniting in the Earth’s atmosphere, why can’t an idea do the same in our cosmic brainpans? Ten years ago, I had stood on the northern shore of a pretty lake while traveling through California’s Sierra Nevada. No paved roads encircled the lake, but there on the other side, amidst a backdrop of craggy hills, faintly appeared some trails. And the sight excited my prefrontal cortex with a desire ... go ride them. But how? The discovery of the Chrysler boat online, and remembering a 1969 Honda SL90 long moldering in my own garage, made the answer abundantly clear. Yet while this sketchy boat/bike concept practically designed itself, making it real would take some work.

Mad for Motosports

What is it with unfulfilled dreams? Since high school, one of mine had been to own a Honda Motosport 90, aka SL90. Whereas the related CL90 scrambler and S90 street bike had dopey stamped-steel “T-bone” frames, the Motosport 90 uniquely featured a dual downtube frame, internal-spring fork, high-mounted fenders, fatter universal tires, and proper dirt-bike styling.

Naturally, after slumbering for decades, the Honda wouldn’t run. A sulfated battery, a carburetor full of dodgy-looking chemical nodules, dark gooey oil in the crankcase, jammed control cables and an inoperable speedometer all surfaced as I began

Operation Motosport CPR. A new battery (hooray, only \$20!) made spark happen, but deeper problems lurked within the tiny Keihin carburetor. Here, every passageway that could be clogged with old gas residue or aluminum oxide was. Also, the slide was frozen in its bore. Lacking a volcano to chuck this tired little Mixmaster into, I set to work. A long soak in carb cleaner followed by dental hygienist-caliber handwork with a pick (originally purchased for dissecting rats in grad school) and other medieval tools got it done.

Swapping rubber seals between the SL90 petcock and a spare CL90 unit produced a working fuel system, excepting one critical component: sunken gasoline-filled floats. Unable to do their job, namely float, they let the engine flood continuously, leading to hard starting and an awful overall state of tune. A magnifying loupe revealed badly pitted brass — a no-fix situation. Repetitive searches produced exactly one OE SL90 float in the U.S., and it was 2,500 miles away and cost a heavy \$85. With a trip looming, I bought it, and the SL90 was reborn.

But my travel buddy, JG, also needed a bike to ride, having sold his vintage Suzuki DR350 a few years back. Luckily, friend Mark came to the rescue by offering his freshly restored 1970 Honda CT90, with the provision that it return undamaged. We were bike-ready.

Rehabbing Rube Goldberg

Until removing the Chrysler’s engine cover, I thought I knew 2-stroke engines. They’re simple, actually. In their most basic form there are just three moving parts: crankshaft, connecting rod

and piston. But under the Chrysler cowling was a rat's nest of wiring, hoses, rods, bell cranks and belts. Worse still, this mechanical maze wouldn't run when I hooked up a fuel tank and car battery, and turned the key.

Unlike a classic bike, which uses gravity to fill the carburetor bowl(s) with fuel, the Chrysler outboard has a vacuum-operated pump to deliver premix from a 6-gallon tank to three Tillotson side-draft carbs. Primitively, the starting process requires squeezing a rubber priming bulb to lift fuel from the low-lying tank to the fuel pump, which wasn't working due to an air leak at the quick-disconnect coupler. No fuel meant no engine start. Rats.

Fortunately, a new coupler was easily sourced, and after removing the float bowls and cleaning the carb passageways, the bowls filled nicely. But the engine still refused to start, instead backfiring dramatically out the exhaust system, which was immersed in a washtub and plastering my house with premix-tinted water in the process. No bueno!

Fearing a sheared flywheel key, I checked the ignition timing,



The SL90 went in first, all the way to the back. The CT90 gets loaded up front, straight from the back of the truck!

which was way off. Fortunately, adjusting the timing required only fine-tuning a threaded rod attached to the distributor. After more trials, I learned the engine likes lots of throttle to start, and with that bit of intel it caught and idled fine in its little private hot tub. Things were looking good.

The load in

Finally, after weeks of fussing, it was packing day. Into a new 2018 Ford F-150 turbo-diesel's bed went the two Hondas, and into the boat went two 6-gallon marine fuel tanks, an aluminum loading ramp, a surfboard, a fluke anchor and chain, two paddles, and dock and bow lines. Our riding gear, life jackets, clothes and a cooler went inside the F-150,

which did a fine job hauling and towing our vintage flotsam-and-jetsam collection.

Hitting the highway to escape Los Angeles, I was relieved to find the boat and trailer towed beautifully. Worried about the two-lane roads stretching like a lazy blacksnake across the hot Mojave Desert, before leaving I'd replaced the trailer wheel



Everybody here can swim, right? Author John (right) and friend JG (left) with their bikes, roaring across the lake.

Bikes, cooler and gear loaded in the boat, it's off across the lake for the trails that beckon on the other side.

bearings (\$30), added new Bearing Buddy protectors and marine grease (\$40), and had new Carlisle 6-ply tires fitted to the diminutive 12-inch trailer rims (\$180). Never was money better spent, because the trailer behaved perfectly over nearly 1,300 miles.

On a Friday morning in late summer, the lake was about as deserted as deserted gets. A few old-timers were fishing, but otherwise, all was quiet, with no Jet Skiers, wakeboarders or pontoon partygoers extant. Except us odd ducks. Make that edgy odd ducks, because the time had come to test the hypothesis that an old rattrap speedboat could be repurposed as an aqueous pickup. Plus, feeling responsible for my friends' safety gnawed away at my gut.

Hull and inspiration

Weeks prior, I had reverse-engineered the bike-loading process, starting with how the bikes should be unloaded once we reached the far side of the lake (assuming we got that far!). This approach required rolling the bikes into the boat backwards, and that's exactly what we did.

Right there in the dirt parking area above the launch ramp, I lowered the truck's tailgate, positioned the ramp from the pickup bed onto the boat's wide bow, cinching it to the bow cleat with a tie-down strap. After untying the SL90, JG and I lifted the rear wheel onto the ramp and rolled it up and backwards toward



the boat. When the rear tire was about to drop over the bow we climbed into the boat's forward seating area, and each grabbed one handgrip and the saddle. From here, we were able to first lower the 220-pound Honda's tail end, and then its front end, slowly into the boat.

With its footpegs folded, the Motosport 90 rolled aft through the walk-through windshield area until the taillight met the splash tray near the engine. While not harmful at rest, much jostling in this position would certainly break the lens. Luckily, a two-by-four under the rear tire lifted the taillight just enough. Using the boat's aft cleats, we secured the SL90 at its upper shock mounts, then added a third tie-down from the fork forward to one of the boat's windshield mounting post. The SL90 was solid.

Encouraged, we repeated the operation with the Trail 90. Lighter at 205 pounds, it proved easier to roll up the ramp,



Across the lake and ready to get this motorcycle business rolling, as it were. Time to break out the ramp and go!

Unloading on the beach went smoothly (right). Helmets on, it's time to ride (far right).

but the narrow walkway near the Chrysler's bow proved a tight storage fit. Yet by folding and protecting the rubber footpegs with shop towels, and employing three more tie-down straps, the bike was snug as a bug in a rug. We were extremely lucky with the fit; 250s, 175s and maybe even 125s likely wouldn't have worked. Better lucky than good!

Sink or swim

Backing the Chrysler and its two-bike cargo into the lake with the F-150 and its rear-facing camera was ridiculously easy, and we'd strategized to position one guy in the boat and another on the dock holding bow and stern lines. As soon as the Sport Fury floated free, truck and trailer scooted back up the ramp. Simple.

With all aboard and all systems apparently "go," I asked JG and photographer Seth DeDoes if they could swim. I don't think they enjoyed the trolling much; they were as worried as I was. There was nothing left to do but turn the Chrysler's ignition key, push it in to activate the electric chokes (a weird boat thing), and then turn it to start. Despite sucking wind at 8,000 feet, the wizened old engine started instantly, snorting, shaking and smoking like Churchill on a whisky bender.

Shake and wake

If you've ever ridden a Kawasaki Mach III in anger, please raise your right hand. That is, if you still can. Because at WFO, that 3-cylinder, 2-stroke buzz bomb on wheels vibrates like a paint shaker full of claw hammers. And it's only 500cc in size. Meanwhile, the Chrysler triple displaces 1,186cc — more than

twice the Mach III with the same cylinder count. As such, I will freely admit that when advancing the throttle for the first time, I was as nervous as when lining up for a race. Would the engine stumble and die, or shake itself off the transom? Or would the strangely loaded hull nose underwater, or worse, roll over and sink? This was a gamble — and we all knew it.

But, winner! Instead of disaster, the boat and engine worked together like a diazepam dream as the revs and speed built. Once in its sweet spot (over about 3,000rpm) the 3-cylinder engine smoothed out radically, and the Cathedral Hull both rode and handled great on plane, just as Mopar had advertised 48 years ago. Eyeing the lake's far shore, we passed an aluminum skiff and its fishermen, who in turn eyed us suspiciously. Transporting our contraband cargo, I felt a surge of adrenaline — perhaps just as the rumrunners felt during Prohibition.

Soon we navigated through a narrow channel and around a point to find a perfectly deserted cove offering a broad, hard-packed beach, a protective rock formation to windward, lovely shimmering Aspens, and beyond them the very trails



Left to right: John aboard the borrowed Honda CT90, and JG riding John's Honda SL90. Trail bikes in their element.

Loaded up and heading back after a day on the trails.

that had ignited my imagination a decade earlier. This was some kind of strange bike trip, but it was working out — so far.

Truly happy trails

To hold the boat while we were onshore, we'd come prepared to throw the anchor and a long scope of chain astern, and then run a bow line onshore to a log, tree or boulder. But when the Chrysler's hull nosed onshore, conditions were so quiet that this seemed wholly unnecessary. As such, roped to the boat's bow eye, the fluke anchor gripped the beach just fine, all afternoon. Unloading the bikes was the reverse of loading, except with the aluminum ramp angling to ground instead of the pickup bed.

Riding back and forth, up and down hills and side by side for photos revealed key differences between the familial Honda 90s. The SL90 ergonomics and suspension were way better than the CT90's, but its street gearing and poor compression (it needed a new top end) meant it struggled to climb hills at this altitude. Call me surprised here.

Conversely, the loaner Trail 90 was an animal, offering crisp performance, better grip from its new universal tires, and importantly, a dual-range gearbox. Rather than struggling with road gearing, the selectable low-range gears helped the CT90 climb anything we encountered, easily. Its only downsides were less suspension travel and the absence of a gas tank to grip with your knees. With a rebuilt top end and lower gearing, the SL90 would rule the roost here. But today, the CT90 held court.

After we'd had enough beach riding, hill climbing and racing side by side on the jeep tracks, I broke away on the SL90 to finally live my high school dream, and explore a mystery. Years ago, an old-timer at the lake had explained that at the end of the Jeep track began a narrow trail that wound as far as you'd



care to go toward the distant Sierra peaks. And that's exactly what I went to find, leaving JG and Seth chilling on the beach.

Lord knows I tried to find it, riding to the absolute end of the jeep track, scanning the surroundings 360 degrees, and then parking the little Motosport and climbing a rocky escarpment for a better perspective. But the alleged single-track just wasn't there — not that I could find, anyway. All that presented itself was hectares of forbidding rock, the kind that's conquerable on foot — but not on a Honda 90.

They say man is empowered by victory, but that we learn more from defeat: I regard this trip as a blend of both. It proved that such an inane quest as using a castoff vintage boat to haul vintage bikes is not only possible, but practical and doable, too. It demonstrated that crucially, the vessel and bikes must fit perfectly together; in this regard, we were really fortunate. It showed the people involved must have the right makeup — meaning enthusiastic, flexible, creative and committed. And it reminded me that not reaching your absolute goal — in my case, finding a mythical trail into the towering Sierras — is no cause to quit.

Instead, it just made me hungry to try again. Only this time it will be with a fresh top-end on the SL90, carb jetting for 8,000 feet and gearing to match. Because of this first-ever "Vintage Boat Cross," I felt the excitement then and still feel it now. Or more precisely, to paraphrase Flounder in *Animal House*: "Oh boy, is this gonna be great!" **MC**





HARVEST CLASSIC 2018

An annual autumn gathering has become a Texas tradition

Story and photos by Corey Levenson

The 16th edition of the Harvest Classic European and Vintage Motorcycle Rally took place under cool gray skies in the tiny Texas Hill Country town of Luckenbach, Oct. 19-20. The word is out about this great event and folks are coming from all over the U.S. to join the party. It's grown from a small regional gathering to a nationally recognized event, but it still feels more like a big ol' Texas family reunion than a fancy motorcycle show.

As with previous rallies, attractions included a trials competition, a raffle and auction, live music, Globe of Death performances, a 100cc Fun Run on Friday and a BBQ dinner on Saturday. A post-BBQ double-feature in the dance hall featured two films: a short titled *Black Lightning: The Rollie Free Story* followed by *ROAD*, a tribute to the Dunlop family of Northern Irish road racers.

The rally's centerpiece is Saturday's bike show with multiple classes represented. There's no formal judging — all votes are cast by attendees. The Rally's founder, Russell Duke, described this year's turnout: "We had a killer bike show with a wide variety of bikes ranging from a 1936 Series A Vincent Comet to a 1992 oval-piston Honda NR750 to a 1929 Henderson KJ sidehack rig that has been in the same family since new." Attendees got a sweet T-shirt featuring this year's poster bike: a burly special

based on a Series C Vincent Black Shadow upgraded to Black Lightning specs owned by rally volunteer Clif Haggard. "The Harvest Classic has always been a celebration of *all* shapes and sizes of motorcycles and the fantastic passion that surrounds them," Clif says. "We always have a great time with our rally family, listening to great music, watching/riding rare, historic and sometimes oddball motorcycles, and camping in Luckenbach. Rain or shine, this is our very favorite weekend of the year."

Todd Wallis is a native Texan who lives in Denver and rides with The Lucky Bastards, a club with members strewn across the U.S. He hauled five bikes to Luckenbach where he met up with other members: "The Harvest Classic is as down home as it gets. A good friend from California looked around in awe and commented that it's a lot different than the Quail Gathering. What makes our community so rewarding is the goodwill and fellowship found in the common bond of old motorcycles."

Since 2003, the Harvest Classic has donated over \$650,000 to the Candlelighters childhood cancer program of "Any Baby Can" and the team hopes to raise the all-time donation to over \$725,000 this year. The rally is a great opportunity for classic bike lovers to get together, enjoy old bikes and raise money for an amazing cause. The 2019 Harvest Classic will be held on Oct. 18-19. Come and join us! On the web at harvestclassic.org **MC**



Dan Farr's class-winning 1947 Ariel BV. Jason Small's class-winning pair of 1967 Benellis were sold as Montgomery Ward bikes.



A new Indian, an old Guzzi and the Globe of Death (above). Mud splattered jackets were all around (above right).

Camping with a Guzzi Quota (top). A super-rare 1992 Honda oval-piston NR750/RC40 (above). Vincenzo Murphy and his Vespa 90 "Luciana" (left).



Clif Haggard and his Vincent special, this year's poster bike (left). Trials riders warming up for competition (right).

A TON OF FUN

Royal Enfield Twins Launch

Story by Alan Cathcart

After more than 50 years of manufacturing the venerable overhead valve 350cc to 500cc Bullet singles, Indian manufacturer Royal Enfield has finally produced its long-awaited, first-ever parallel-twin models, the 650cc Continental GT and INT650.



The overhead cam 650cc Continental GT and Interceptor (known in the U.S. as the INT650, since Honda owns the rights to the Interceptor name) are finally heading for dealerships around the world in early 2019. The company's dynamic CEO, Siddhartha Lal, believes these new bikes bring the carefree Swingin' Sixties era back to motorcycling — in price and volume, as well as carefree performance.

When deliveries start in January 2019 to the 90-plus dealers in what Lal forecasts will become Royal Enfield's largest export market, the U.S., followed soon after by its 1,340 out-

lets elsewhere in the world, a large selection of eye-catching retro paintwork choices will be available in the U.S. across the Standard, Custom and Chrome versions for bargain basement prices. These start at \$5,799 for the INT650 roadster, \$5,999 for the equivalent Continental GT café racer models, and only up to \$6,749 for the top-of-the-range versions. That's a lot of motorcycle for the money. Better yet, those prices include a three-year unlimited mileage warranty and roadside assistance for bikes sold in the U.S. and Canada.



The new Royal Enfield Continental GT (left) and INT650 (right).



Roll out

The Indian manufacturer chose Santa Cruz, on the Central California Coast, as the location for the global riding launch of these two bikes — the first twin-cylinder volume production motorcycles ever built in India, and the country's first street bikes capable of doing the ton (100mph). The choice of venue was deliberate, for it was California's post-war motorcycling boom that created a revolution in British motorcycle manufacturing, and helped Royal Enfield establish itself as a global brand. Now Lal and his colleagues are hoping to do the same all over again with these two models powered by the company's all-new 648cc air/oil-cooled parallel twin



ROYAL ENFIELD INT650/ CONTINENTAL GT650

Engine: 648cc air/oil-cooled SOHC parallel twin, 78mm x 67.8mm bore and stroke, 9.5:1 compression ratio, 47hp @ 7,250rpm (at crankshaft)

Top speed: NA

Fueling: Bosch multipoint sequential fuel injection

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, digital electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Dual downtube steel cradle frame/55.1in (1,400mm)

Suspension: 41mm Gabriel telescopic fork front, twin Gabriel gas-charged piggyback shocks w/5-stage adjustable preload rear

Brakes: Single 12.6in (320mm) disc front, single 9.4in (240mm) disc rear

Tires: 100/90 x 18in front, 130/70 x 18in rear

Weight (dry): 444.4lb (202kg) INT/435.6lb (198kg) Continental

Seat height: 31.7in (804mm) INT/31.1in (790mm) Continental, 31.2in (793mm) dual-seat Continental

Fuel capacity: 3.6gal (13.7ltr) INT/3.3gal (12.5ltr) Continental

Price: Starting at \$5,799 (INT650) and \$5,999 (Continental GT)



Both bikes wear twin Gabriel piggyback shocks at the rear (far left). The 648cc twin uses Bosch multipoint fuel injection (above).

engine, jointly developed in India and at the company's state-of-the-art British technology center at Bruntingthorpe.

In spite of being "just" a 650, it's a physically large and visually imposing engine that fills the frame, and its highly polished engine covers match the chrome exhaust, double-skinned to add thickness and quality to the design while protecting the chrome from discoloration. It's worth noting that Enfield's performance partners S&S have already produced an 865cc

The INT650 wears higher bars and lower pegs than the café-styled Continental GT (facing page).





version of the engine for the Lock Stock factory custom, without any modification to the external engine castings. Word is that two further Royal Enfield twin-cylinder platforms will be launched in the next five years, each with a different chassis and different engine capacity, as part of a 12-model blitz to firmly establish the Indian company as the global leader in the middleweight motorcycle market.

But that's in the future, and the INT650 and Continental GT are here and now. A close look at the new bikes during two full days of riding them through the spectacular mountain roads around Santa Cruz revealed that Royal Enfield's build quality has taken a significant step forward, even compared to the bikes first displayed at EICMA 2017. Great attention to detail is apparent, including how the oil cooler and lines match up perfectly with the downtubes of the frame. Other than the wiring loom being visible next to the steering head, there's barely a screw, hose or cable out of place, and one nice touch is a rear brake lever that looks like a gear lever to emulate the right-foot gear-shift on the original 750cc Interceptor, which ceased production when Royal Enfield shut down in Britain in 1970. The classic-style twin-clock analog instruments feature a separate tachometer and a speedometer with a built-in LCD screen displaying fuel level, odometer and two trip meters.

On the move

The two-day press launch comprised successive days aboard each model, giving ample time to evaluate each one thoroughly. First up was the Continental GT. Climbing aboard revealed a lengthy reach to the clip-on handlebars, despite being set well above the upper triple clamp, delivering a sporty, hunkered-

down riding position once on the move. The single seat fitted to the test bikes was pretty firm, and after seeing a model fitted with the optional twin seat with rear cowl, it looks as if that was the original design by the way it hides the rear subframe, otherwise exposed on the single-seat model. But the slim design of the seat where it meets the fuel tank and its 31.1-inch height allowed an easy reach to the ground, and my 5-foot-10-inch frame found the seating position extremely comfortable, my knees fitting snugly into the cut-outs of the fuel tank. In spite of the sporty stance, there isn't undue weight on your arms and shoulders, and I felt far from tired after a 150-mile day of spirited riding, just exhilarated.

The twin-cylinder engine, identical to both models, is definitely the star of the show in terms of riding satisfaction: This is a little bike — OK, a middleweight — that thinks big. It's a willing companion for a blast through the winding roads of the Californian Redwood forests en route to Skyline Boulevard and the legendary Alice's Restaurant, a gathering point for Bay Area bikers.

You never forget that it's "just" a 650, because it doesn't have the torque or power of a 900cc twin or even a 750cc — but that's OK, because the Royal Enfield engine invites you to work hard at making it go fast — as it will. Make maximum use of the light action, slip-assist clutch and precise but slightly notchy gear-shift (perhaps because the bikes were all straight off the 3,000-unit pilot pre-production line) to keep it revving, and you'll be rewarded with impressive levels of performance from the 78mm x 67.8mm single overhead cam engine. It's a willing partner in making the new Royal Enfield twins a ton of fun to ride hard.

The engine's best asset is the flawless mapping of the Bosch



Alan Cathcart at speed aboard the Continental GT in the hills outside Santa Cruz, Calif.

ECU. It would be impossible to improve on the fueling and especially the pickup from a closed throttle, which is ultra-smooth and devoid of even the slightest jerk. That's especially the case after braking deep into a turn and then getting on the throttle again to drive out of the apex — there's just a liquid-smooth reaction to what your right hand is doing, and the response from closed to part or even full throttle is perfect. This again makes the bike an ideal ride for less-experienced riders — in contrast to, say, the snatchy pickup from a Ducati Scrambler. On the Royal Enfield twins you just twist and go, with a totally linear build of both power and torque, peaking at 7,250rpm with 47 horsepower on tap. From throttle opening through to the 7,500rpm rev limiter the power delivery is impressive for a middleweight engine. Coupled with abundant torque ideally spread throughout the rev range, the engine delivers a predictable and controllable surge of acceleration as soon as you twist the throttle to exit a turn.

Running north on the open Pacific Coast Highway alongside the ocean, I found myself sitting much of the time between 60-70mph in fourth gear, enjoying the sound and performance from the parallel twin as it hummed along at 5,000rpm. Clicking

up two gears to the overdrive sixth for freeway riding reveals an engine happy to run at 75mph all day, and while a click back to fifth is needed to gather momentum quickly, cruising at 100mph with the tach needle stuck on the 6,500rpm mark for sustained periods of time is no problem. For a 650cc motorcycle, this is a very highway-friendly device.

The single, gear-driven counter balancer removes every trace of vibration all the way to the hard-action 7,500rpm rev limiter, which I quickly made friends with; the torque curve is completely flat all the way to that rpm level, so you have no advance warning that you're nearing peak revs. The sound from the stock exhaust is an enjoyable, semi-angry burble that's similar to a 90-degree V-twin thanks to the new twin's 270-degree crank, although the rorty sound of the aftermarket S&S slip-ons on one of the bikes in our group will surely make them a must-have item for anyone who hears them.

Though it doesn't get tiring, the Continental GT's riding position places a good part of the rider's weight on the handlebar, providing good feedback from the front Pirelli tire even though the well-damped and surprisingly compliant Indian-made Gabriel 41mm conventional-style fork is non-adjustable.

The inside view: RE North America CEO Rod Copes

"We established Royal Enfield North America three years ago, as our first wholly owned distributor outside India. In January 2016, we began establishing a dealer network in North America, which at present totals 90 dealers, including 12 in Canada plus one in Mexico. Most dealers in the U.S. and Canada are multi-brand franchises, and we're growing the network continuously.

"The previous independent U.S. importer sold approximately 500 single-cylinder Classic/Bullet 500 models annually. 2016 was a year of transition, when we officially took over distribution

and had to rebuild the dealer network from the ground up. After focusing on finding the right dealers to represent the brand we sold around 750 units in 2017, but in 2018 we'll more than double our sales thanks to the arrival of the Himalayan, which we launched in Texas in March. It's been a big hit here in North America, and we believe our sales will continue to grow.

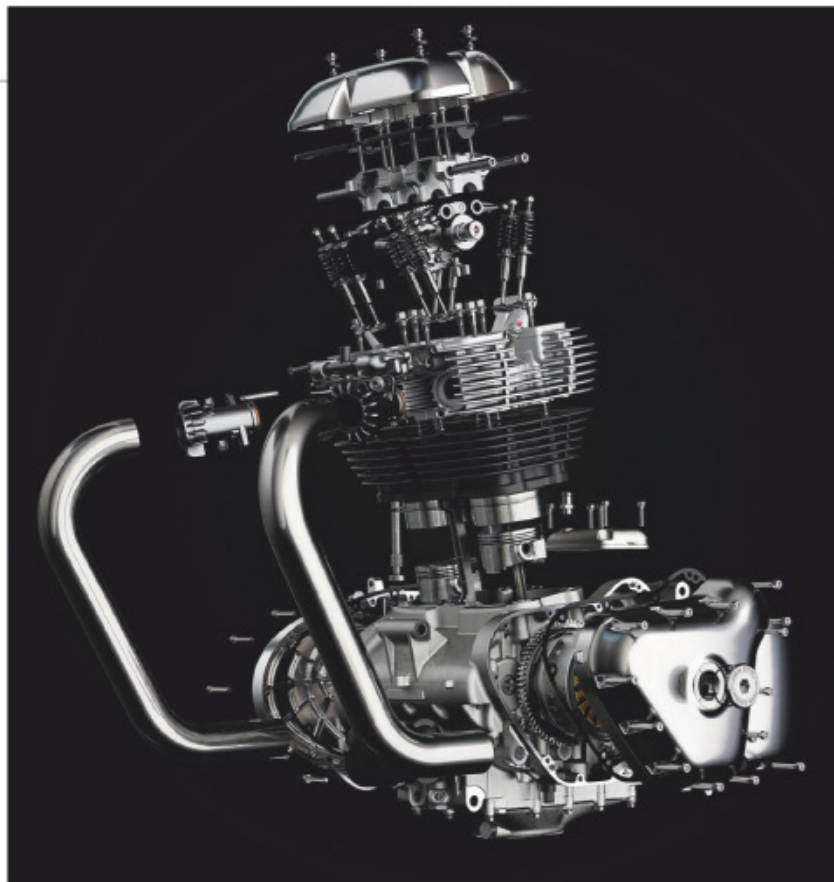
"So now we're looking forward to receiving the first INT650 and Continental GT Twins this spring 2019. Pricing for the Twins starts at \$5,799 for the INT650 and \$5,999 for the

Continental GT, which I believe will further reinforce our position as the world's leading OEM of middleweight motorcycles. We think it's a sweet spot in the market.

"In arriving at this pricing we looked at where these bikes are going to fit in our overall lineup in the future. We have many new models coming in the next five years, including two new platforms with a different chassis and different engine capacity that will provide an overall price range of \$4,000 to \$8,000, so everything has to relate one to another." — Alan Cathcart

These new 650 twins may be built to a price point, but Royal Enfield's engineering team has achieved a lot with its design brief. At a relaxed pace, the fork absorbs bumps in the road surface easily, though the more heavily sprung twin-shock rear end, with its limited 3.46 inches of wheel travel, is much "drier" and does skip around a fair bit over bumps, plus ride quality isn't the greatest over rippled everyday road surfaces. Under spirited riding the twin-shock rear end underlined why progressive rate links and monoshock rear ends replaced such a format decades ago. The stiff springs make the rebound a little too quick, with insufficient damping causing the bike to bounce around a bit over some bumps, but despite that short stroke length there was no bottoming out.

The well-designed, stiff and predictable frame (courtesy of RE subsidiary Harris Performance) more than compensated for that minor suspension gripe. At road speeds on long sections of flowing S-bends taken in third or fourth gear, the Enfield twins handled fast changes of direction very capably and relatively easily. This further demonstrated the success of the development work that's gone into tuning the chassis, its 18-inch wheels shod with retro-look Pirelli Phantom Sportscomp tires. The compacted mass of the parallel-twin engine package compared to a rangier V-twin engine also helps it turn more easily,



The single overhead cam twin uses 4 valves per cylinder, and a single gear-driven counterbalancer to reduce vibration.

and the relatively sharp steering geometry, with a 24-degree head angle and 4.17 inches of trail, coupled with a relatively tight 55.1-inch wheelbase, all combine to make it steer well.

ByBre, Brembo's Indian affiliate, supplies the brakes, and while the stopping power of the single twin-pot front caliper and 12.6-inch disc is okay, with nice feedback through the lever, it could benefit from more initial bite. I suspect that pad choice

has been directed towards less experienced riders and not making them feel nervous about locking the brakes (they won't; ABS is standard), but whatever the cause, you must use both brakes hard to stop from any speed. At the rear, the single-pot caliper and 9.4-inch disc are good for settling the bike mid-corner, but the rear ABS was a little hit and miss, allowing the rear tire to momentarily lock on occasion when the pedal was worked hard.

Riding the INT650

You'd think just adding a different seat, tank and handlebar to a motorcycle wouldn't make that much difference, but the Continental GT and INT650 have totally different personalities. The longer, taller and better padded seat on the INT650 provided greater comfort than the GT, especially with the footrests brought 2.56 inches forward on this version. Both models have a similar footrest-to-seat length, but the additional space to

The teardrop tank and long, flat seat of the INT650 give it a retro roadster vibe.



A Continental GT, shown in the available Ice Queen paint scheme.

move about on the INT650 makes it feel longer and more spacious than the GT, which it is, even though the pulled-back handlebar delivers a more upright, taller stance. Cruising gently along the coast road in Santa Cruz on the INT650, it felt like a really capable, everyday ride.

However, another enjoyable blast through the twists and turns of the Redwood forests revealed that it liked to push the front wheel more than the Continental GT, meaning I kept missing apexes and had to back off the throttle to pull it back on line. At one of our stops I talked this over with ex-500GP racer Paul Young, Royal Enfield's chief test rider. He knew the fix; adding two turns to the preload adjusters on the Gabriel shocks, which raised the rear ride height by 0.31 inches for more weight on the front wheel as well as tightening the effective head angle of the fork. It fixed the problem. Enfield deliver the INT650 this way to give a more compliant ride with greater wheel travel to cope with bumps in urban use, but for more spirited riding, it needs a bit of adjustment. In terms of suspension, though, the Interceptor's Gabriel fork was as well-behaved as ever, with



unchanged damping from the GT.

Both of these new Royal Enfield Twins are enjoyable, mid-capacity retro-styled machines blessed with a great engine and super handling. And when the low price point is taken into consideration, there is nothing else in the market even remotely like these 650cc twins, and certainly nothing else giving comparable performance for the money — for the time being. **MC**



Making Custom Spokes... It's what we do!

We swage, cut, head, bend and thread every spoke we make to suit each specific custom application, using only American milled and certified wire. Take advantage of our expert wheelsmithing services when you ship us your hub.

phone: 626.969.4655
fax: 626.812.0243
buchananspokes.com

BUCHANAN'S

Spoke & Rim, Inc.
Est. 1958

Your source for Excel, Borrani and Sun Rims



Azusa, CA

SPECTRO

performance oils



THE BEST OIL
ON PLANET EARTH.



Since 1966

Spectro-Oils.com | 800-243-8645 | [f](#) [ig](#) [tw](#) @SpectroOils

Over 3,000 parts available!!



CB750K series

750 Four



YAMIYA ONLINE STORE

CB400FOUR series

SUPER SPORT

400 FOUR



www.yamiya750.com



MOTORCYCLE YAMIYA

PHONE / 81-52-452-7230 FAX / 81-52-452-7231
E-mail / info@yamiya750.com



JAPAN QUALITY



Motorcycle Yamiya 閼矢屋
Please click "like" our facebook!
Check out our new arrivals and special info!

Monthly Campaign!!

DANIA BEACH VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE SHOW

Saturday, January 26, 2019

FROST PARK
Just south of Ft. Lauderdale, FL



PROUD SUPPORTER OF



Clive Taylor 954 830-8855
daniabikeshow@yahoo.com



www.daniabeachvintagebikeshow.com

THE DARIEN JACKET

“Simply the best stuff
on the planet...”

-Review by Brent



AEROSTICH
SINCE 1982

Equipment for Riders

New gear, downloadable catalog
& more specials online at:
aerostich.com/mcc

Photo: Pedro Saldarriaga

©2018

**JOB
CYCLE**
SINCE 1978

Norton BSA TRIUMPH

"WHEN YOU
WANT IT DONE
RIGHT THE
FIRST TIME"

VINTAGE SERVICES

- Complete rebuilding of all Vintage British, Japanese & American motorcycle engines & transmissions.
- Valve jobs, cylinder boring
- Welding, custom machining, powder coating
- Complete wheel rebuilding

COMPLETE REPAIR SERVICE

HUGE INVENTORY OF
NEW OLD STOCK AND
REPRODUCTION
PARTS FOR:

- NORTON
- TRIUMPH
- BSA

86 BOSTON TURNPIKE,
(ROUTE 44)

WILLINGTON, CT 06279

860-848-0607

FAX 860-487-9916

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.jobcycle.com
EMAIL: info@jobcycle.com

Daily
Shipping
Worldwide



www.elektronik-sachse.de

**ELEKTRONIK
SACHSE** **MP**
GmbH & Co. KG



Digital Ignition Systems | Alternator Regulators
Classic Tachometers | Accessories
For Vintage Motorcycles and Classic Racing
2- and 4-stroke
Moto Guzzi, Ducati, BMW, BSA, Honda, Yamaha, etc.

Busestraße 26a | 28213 Bremen | Germany
fon +49 (0) 5409 9069826 | mail info@elektronik-sachse.de



KATANA CRAZY

A collection of Suzukis unlike any other

Story by Bud McIntire
Photos by Drew Shipley

Down an alley off Main Street in Willoughby, Ohio, stands an innocuous, two-story brick building. Inside lies the culmination of one man's 35-year obsession with a unique and groundbreaking motorcycle, Suzuki's incredible Katana.

The obsession began in 1982 when Ken Edgar, then just 14 years old, first laid his eyes on the then-new and radically designed Suzuki Katana. The name, borrowed from a Japanese samurai sword, made the new bike's mission clear. Edgar was thunderstruck.

And while many teenage boys develop an attachment or fascination with a particular motorcycle or car, with the passing of time the attraction and excitement fades. In Ken's case,

however, it just got stronger. After four summers of working landscaping, scrounging and saving, Ken bought his first Katana. It was used and not in the best of shape, but it was his — finally — and it became the starting point for a unique and comprehensive collection of this milestone motorcycle.

The Katana

In the late 1970s, Suzuki's GS750 and GS1000 4-cylinder models were very capable motorcycles. Like the Honda CB750, Kawasaki KZ900 and other 4-cylinder bikes of the day, they were among the UJMs, or Universal Japanese Motorcycles, so named for their seemingly universal application of almost identical technical specifications. Looking for a new direction, Suzuki-Germany marketing director Manfred Becker initiated the idea of a completely new and attention-grabbing motorcycle, retaining the services of a newly created firm, Target Design, to produce the first concept studies of a new design based on the production GS550 and GS650 models.



A 1983 GS650MD (left), 1983 GS750MD (middle), 1983 GS1100SD (rear) and a KISS pinball machine (right).

The three partners in Target Design, Hans Muth, Hans-Georg Kasten and Jan Fellstrom, had been lead designers with the BMW Motorrad studios. Target Design's proposal for the GS550/650, known as ED-1 (European Design 1), was enthusiastically approved by Suzuki-Germany, and subsequently by Suzuki Japan, which assigned Masao Tani as the project manager and engineer. In fact, this first design was so well received that Suzuki asked Target to work on another prototype concept study based on their production GS1100.

With the acceptance of the first prototype, Target felt they could push the envelope a bit further with a second design.

Known internally as ED-2, this is the design usually associated with the Katana. As with the GS550 concept, the GS1100 design presentation included numerous sketches, scale renderings and a full-size model. The ED-2 concept Katana was first shown publicly at the Cologne Motorcycle Show in the fall of 1980, and the mission of bringing significant attention to Suzuki was accomplished, as motorcycle magazines around the world published photos and enthusiastic commentary about this unique and groundbreaking new design. Love it or hate it, it couldn't be ignored.

The production Katana came to the U.S. in 1981 as the GS1000S Katana, the 1,100cc engine getting a 2mm bore and 1.2mm stroke reduction for a displacement of 998cc to slot into AMA Superbike racing, which had a 1,000cc limit. In 1983 the U.S. model evolved into the 1,100cc GS1100S found worldwide.

Ken's Katana obsession

Ken's first sighting of the Katana was at the very beginning of its worldwide introduction, and his focus on this iconic design never wavered. After high school, Ken went to college in Ft. Collins, Colorado, and he often went by the Suzuki dealer to look at and sit on the new Katana, and imagine owning one.

Returning to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1988 to start his career, Ken's interest in the Katana continued growing, and he started collecting bikes as he could, over time acquiring pristine, low-mileage examples of every Katana model sold in the U.S., including the initial GS1000S and GS1100S, as well as several of the 550, 650 and 750 variants. Ken's bikes are all very low-mileage machines, and many have near-zero miles. All of the production Katanas in Ken's collection are in original, showroom condition, handsomely displayed



Another view of the handbuilt Target Design ED-2 prototype made for Suzuki.



A large, outdoor Suzuki dealer sign (left), a 1982 GS550MZ and the original Target Design ED-2 prototype (right).

with banners, marketing posters and other period pieces highlighted with museum-quality lighting.

After acquiring all of the production U.S. Katana models, Ken began searching for unique Katanas with special histories, in the process acquiring the original Katana GS1000S race bike piloted by Wes Cooley. It came in as-raced condition, with all the modifications made by the Suzuki/Yoshimura team in campaigning the bike and still wearing track dust and oil stains. On display in Ken's museum it looks like a warhorse, waiting to storm back onto the track.

He then acquired a new, in-the-crate Katana GS1000S from a dealer in London. A U.S. model, the English dealer had bought it from the same Suzuki dealer in Ft. Collins that Ken used to visit while in school. In all likelihood, that very bike was in its crate in the backroom while Ken was sitting on another one on the showroom floor. Last, and perhaps most importantly, a friend in Europe told him that a unique Katana was coming up for auction at a Bonhams sale in England. Perusing the auction catalog, Ken realized that this was more than just simply a "unique" Katana: It was Target Design's original ED-2 prototype. Ken was able to acquire this most significant Katana as the capstone to his collection, and it occupies a special place of honor in his museum.

The museum

With the quality and extent of these acquisitions, Ken always envisioned an environment conducive to displaying the results of his 35-year quest and he has accomplished this masterfully. The building housing his collection has been beautifully restored, an eight-year project completed to Ken's high standards. As a tribute to both the Katana's milestone design and the quality of Ken's

collection, the Guggenheim Museum's Art of the Motorcycle exhibition in Las Vegas, Nevada, featured one of Ken's examples of the initial GS1000S Katana.

In keeping with *Motorcycle Classics'* Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em mantra, Ken has several nice, street-able Katanas that he rides on a regular basis. In addition to the aesthetics of the design that first captured his imagination, Ken enjoys the Katana's aggressive riding position and the freight train GS engine, which really comes to life on back roads at 6,000rpm-plus. More than with many bikes, on a Katana you feel like a part of the machine, and you look for the next sweeping



Ken's 1982 GS1000SZ, which was featured in The Art of the Motorcycle exhibit.



Collector Ken Edgar (above left). The outside of the warehouse where the collection lives (above right). An original 1982 Katana GS1000SZ, still in the crate (right).

turn to come at you at extra-legal speeds. And when he finally pulls over for a break, there is a natural tendency to take a few steps back and just admire what Suzuki and Target Design created with their unique design and their commitment to the mission of creating an iconic, milestone motorcycle. Ken likes to think he's honoring their commitment through his own commitment to preserve the legacy of their efforts.

Suzuki produced variations of the original ED-1 and ED-2 Katana designs worldwide until 2000, with the Final Edition GS1100 SY Katana. Although the 1,100cc version is the most well-known of the Katana line, there were also 250, 400, 550, 650 and 750cc derivatives, all sharing the distinctive Katana elements. Even today, the original design still looks innovative and distinctive, a fact that has driven demand and prices for well-sorted examples well into the five-figure range. **MC**



Katana redux: Suzuki revives the past

Suzuki first hinted at a revived Katana at the 2017 EICMA show in Italy when it teased the public with a Katana concept bike dreamed up by Italian sport bike magazine *Motociclismo*. Last October, Suzuki made the concept a reality when it debuted the 2020 Katana at the 2018 Intermot show in Cologne, Germany.

Looking strikingly similar to *Motociclismo*'s 2017 concept, the new Katana's bodywork takes its styling cues from the late, great GS-based Katana, last produced in 2000. Based on the current Suzuki GSX-S1000F, the new Katana features that bike's twin-spar aluminum frame and 148 horsepower, 999cc fuel-injected double overhead cam four. As such, it boasts features owners of original Katanas could only dream of, including ABS and a three-mode traction control system. Suzuki hasn't announced pricing, but the new Katana, which is set to go on sale in 2019, is expected to slot in close to the GSX-S1000F, which lists for \$11,299. It will be available in any color you want, as long as it's Metallic Mystic Silver.



VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE PAINTING

SPECIALIZING IN HONDA, KAWASAKI, SUZUKI, YAMAHA and MORE



We can paint your parts or supply color matched DIY products.

Reasonable pricing and high quality work. Factory colors matched. Specializing in candy colors.

Tank cleanout and lining available. Decals, Badges and Parts available.



MARBLES MOTORS

WWW.MARBLESMOTORS.COM

call us at 214.686.0044

The Chopper

by Vanson Leathers

Based on the California Highway Patrol design, a stylish update to this timeless classic jacket.



- Slant Front Zipper
- Brass Hardware
- Leather-Lined Inside Gun Pocket
- Red Quilt Lining
- 2 Zip-Close Exterior Hand Pockets



(508) 678-2000

www.vansonleathers.com

Circle #8; see card pg 81

SPEED MOTO CO

CAFE RACER RAT BIKE
COOL & RETRO PARTS

TRANSFORM YOUR MOTORCYCLE!

SPEEDMOTOCO.COM

EMAIL:
shop@speedmotoco.com

TEXT: 541-357-9295 CALL: 541-687-6400

"When the time is right...
will you be ready?"

Fire it up with KickMagic!
pneumatic starter kits



- EASIER kick starting
- SAFER with no kickbacks
- FASTER engine starting RPMs

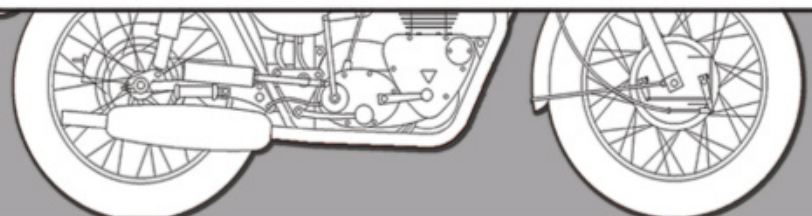
Created & built by The Classic Bike Experience in Essex, Vermont

KickMagic

Phone: 802.878.5383

For vintage Triumph owners
who want some extra 'umph
in their kickstart!

KICKMAGICSTARTER.COM



LOWBOY RACER

Norton 350cc 40M

Story by Alan Cathcart

Photos by Kel Edge

The Manx Norton has no rivals for the accolade of being the ultimate British racing single, whether in 350cc or 500cc guise. As a production race bike, only the later Yamaha TZ250/350 can match its global appeal and formidable record of success over such an extended period in the hands of its customers.

Way back when

In 1950 Norton introduced the “double-knocker” Manx engine (the nickname it received due to its new double overhead cam design). Combined with the Ulster-built Featherbed frame designed by the McCandless brothers, it enabled the Bracebridge Street factory to keep abreast of the emerging European multi-cylinder opposition for a few extra years, providing Geoff Duke with the means to take both 350cc and 500cc World Championships in 1951, and the 350cc title again in 1952.

The single-cylinder Manx Norton is a gallant example of the traditional British love of the underdog, for even after the factory team withdrew from racing at the end of 1954, Norton’s image was yet upheld by the hundreds of privateers who continued to race Manx Nortons successfully right up until the early 1970s.

But as far as World Championships went, Duke’s trio of titles was the end of the line for Norton. Yet the British factory continued developing new ways of keeping its aging singles competitive, particularly in terms of frontal area, against the wider, heavier fours. This resulted in the so-called “Silver Fish” Kneeler frame in 1953, and the following year’s low-slung F-Type (for “Flat”) engine with its horizontal cylinder, a concept borrowed from Moto Guzzi. Unfortunately, Norton race boss Joe Craig’s attempts to emulate Guzzi via the F-Type were stymied when the board of AMC, which had purchased Norton one year earlier, announced the company would withdraw from Grand Prix racing immediately. Moving forward, Norton would only race what it sold, so Norton’s race shop would only develop and manufacture the 350/500cc Manx customer racers. These became a mainstay of road racing throughout Europe and Australasia, and at all levels from club racing up to and including the Continental Circus, where Nortons stacked Grand Prix starting grids for two decades.







1960 NORTON 350CC 40M LOWBOY

Engine: 348cc air-cooled DOHC single, 76mm x 76.7mm bore and stroke, 10.1:1 compression ratio, 42hp @ 7,800rpm

Top speed: NA

Carburetion: Single 31mm Amal GP with twin remote float chambers

Transmission: 4-speed AMC close-ratio, chain final drive

Electrics: Lucas magneto

Frame/wheelbase: Modified Norton Wideline Featherbed tubular steel duplex cradle frame/58.5in (1,485mm)

Suspension: Modified Norton Roadholder telescopic fork front, dual Girling shocks w/adjustable pre-load rear

Brakes: 8in (203mm) TLS Norton drum front, 7in (178mm) SLS Norton drum rear

Tires: 2.75/3.00 x 19in front, 3.50 x 18in rear

Weight (dry): 298lb (135kg)

Seat height: 28in (710mm)

Fuel capacity: 3.25gal (12.3ltr)



The small tach is just visible inside the fairing on the left (above left). The fuel tank sits behind the engine!

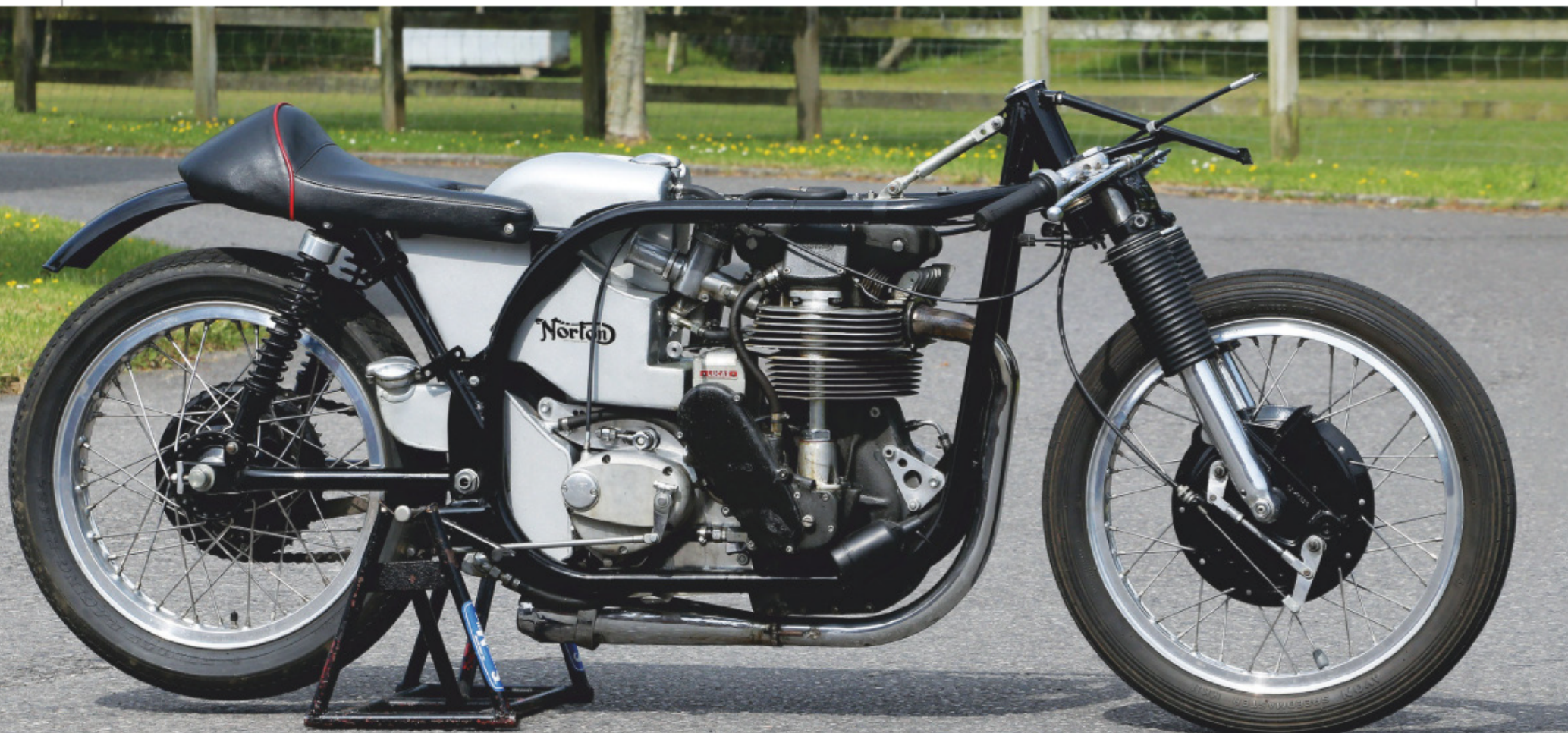
Room for improvement

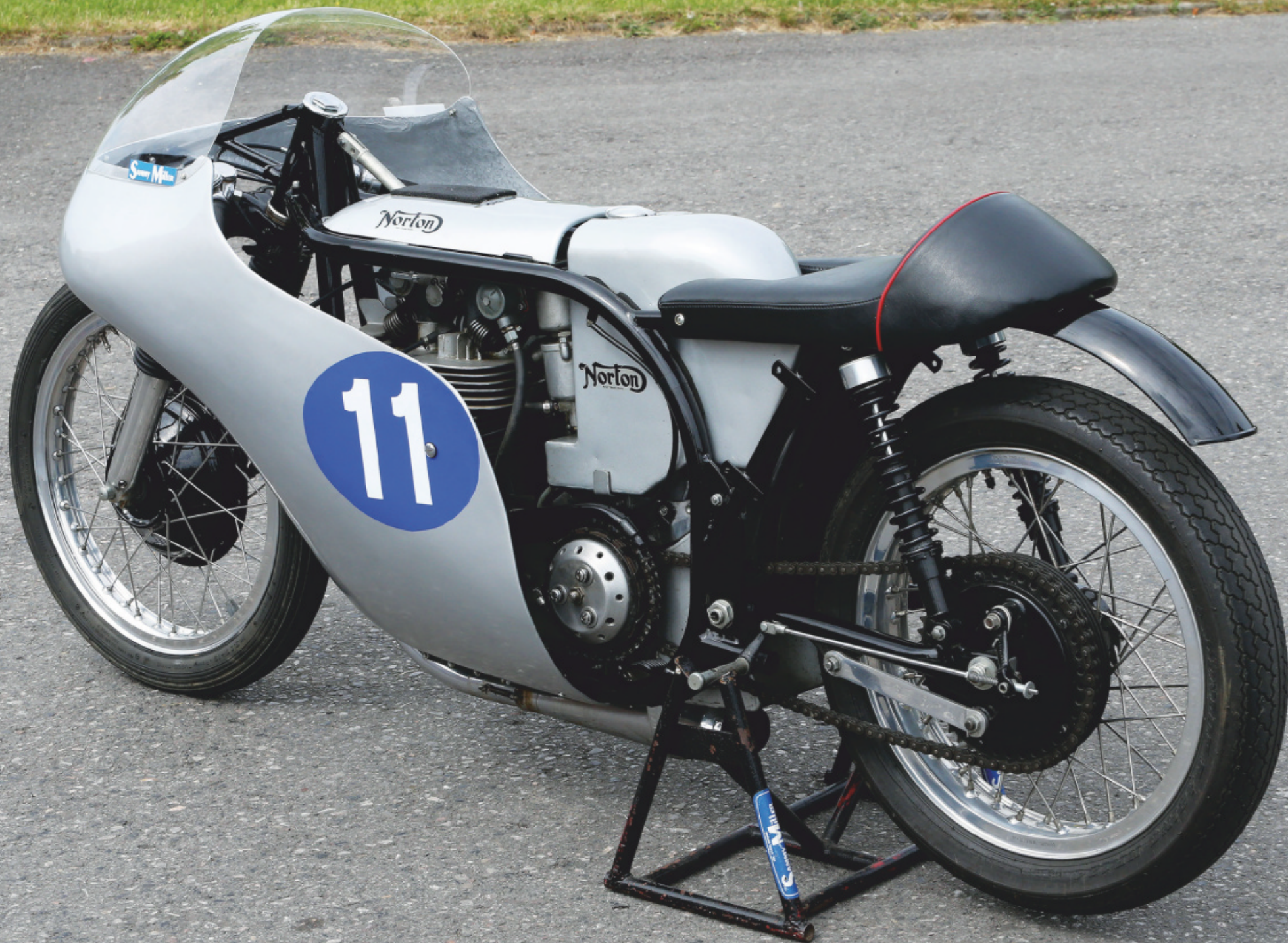
In addition to making countless improvements to the engine, many of which found their way to the customer Manx models, Norton's development engineer and race boss Doug Hele continued to explore reducing the existing Norton singles' top speed handicap versus the fours, without developing an all-new engine. His most extreme experiment appeared in practice for the 1960 Junior TT in the Isle of Man, the 350cc Lowboy prototype.

Fitted with a standard 1959-specification 40M engine with hairpin springs — but no engine number denoting its factory genesis — the Lowboy radically re-invented the Manx Norton's architecture to achieve a 3-inch reduction in height, with consequent advantages in top speed. Hele claimed the center of gravity was 2 inches lower than on a standard Manx.

The Lowboy was tested in April 1960 by new Norton rider Dave Chadwick, who reported excellent handling. Chadwick was supposed to ride it in the Junior TT, but was tragically killed the next week at the Circuit Jules Tacheney Mettet in Belgium, so for the TT the Lowboy was given to Eddie Crooks, winner of the previous year's Manx GP on a Norton. However, he only managed a single practice lap on it at just under 90mph before declaring it unsuitable for racing because of the strain on his wrists and shoulders resulting from the lack of a fuel tank to rest his chest on at speed. Instead, Crooks reverted to a standard-framed 350 Manx, finishing 13th ahead of teammate and former Norton works rider John Surtees.

Crooks' thumbs-down for the Lowboy didn't get it thrown in the race shop's bin just yet, and at that season's final Oulton Park race in October it reappeared in the hands of local rider Keith





Terretta. The Lowboy had new handlebar and footrest mountings fitted in an effort to make the rider more comfortable, as well as a wire cage over the cylinder head, complete with pad for the rider to rest his chin on. However, the resultant higher stance gave away part of the wind-cheating aspect, further compromised by the adoption of a taller and more conventional fairing.

Terretta got turfed off in his heat race at Oulton after coming together with two other riders, though not before commenting favorably on the Lowboy's handling, as well as on the new Amal GP2 carb fitted, with extra downdraft thanks to a modified inlet port on the factory cylinder head. That was the last time the Lowboy appeared in public for another 40 years, and it was junked after AMC shut down Norton's race shop in 1961. Fortunately, it was rescued from the scrap heap by specials builder Bob Collier, who'd worked at Norton's Experimental Department since 1949. A copious builder of off-the-wall specials, Collier understood the advantages of low build, having created the RGC 350cc GP single that debuted at the 1953 Belgian GP at Spa, with an AJS 7R engine canted over at 45 degrees to produce an ultra-low, wind-cheating profile.

Revival

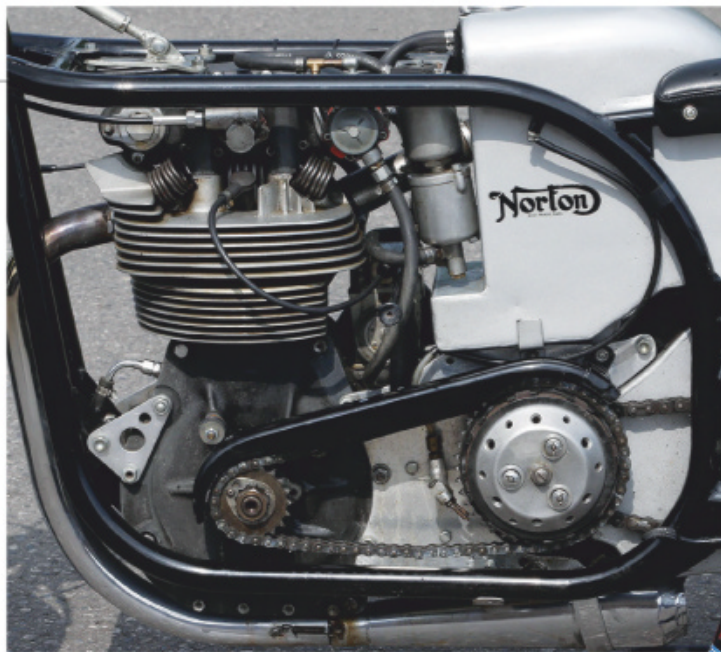
Sadly, Collier didn't have time to revive the Lowboy, which languished in a disassembled state in a shed until 1997 when it was acquired from him by Sammy Miller. "It was very tired but almost complete, except for the seat, engine cover and the original fairing," Sammy says. Sammy has four of Collier's motorcycles in his famous Sammy Miller Museum (sammymler.co.uk).

"Bob Stanley [the Miller Museum's mechanical maestro] and I

restored it in around four months, but rather than make a replica fairing we decided to put it on display without any bodywork, so people could appreciate the blue sky thinking behind it. Lo and behold, a couple of years after I'd ridden it at a Mallory Park demo, I was contacted by Dave Latheron at B&J Motorcycles in Lancashire to say he'd had the fairing for many years, and would I like to have it! We came to an agreement, refitted the bodywork, and now it's exactly as Eddie Crooks rode it in TT practice."

Hele created the Lowboy by removing the standard 5-1/4-gallon fuel tank from its place atop the twin upper frame rails running over the engine, stretching the Manx Featherbed chassis in order to replace it with a 3-1/4-gallon light alloy tank mounted behind the engine within the frame, above the 4-speed Manx gearbox. The tank extends under the rider's seat, with a cutaway on the right side to give space for the Amal GP carb. To make room for this, the swingarm pivot was extended rearwards by welding its mounting plates to the rear faces of the frame tubes, contributing to extending the wheelbase from the standard Manx's 56 inches to the Lowboy's 58.5 inches. This also made room for the alloy oil tank to be squeezed into the space behind the gearbox and above the swingarm pivot, but its proximity to the primary case meant its neck with filler cap exited on the right rather than on the left as was then more commonplace. It was all a master class in exploiting every bit of real estate on the motorcycle.

The fuel tank was cut away on the front left to make room for two remote float chambers, stacked one above the other. Because the new fuel tank was too low to provide gravity feed to the Amal carb, an AC fuel pump was fitted, driven off the rear (inlet) camshaft. To obviate problems encountered with delivering a



The bike doesn't have an upper triple tree: The clip-ons bolt to a brace attached to both forks (far left).

a plate joining the frame's cross-tube to the top of the cylinder head.

pressurized flow of fuel to the carb, Hele mounted a secondary float chamber above its partner to act as a header tank for it, duly fed by the pump, with any excess fuel bled off to return to the main tank. Neat, although you do need to push the bike around a bit in gear (preferably with the spark plug out!) before starting it in order to prime the upper float chamber, then tickle the bottom "real" one as usual, before it can be persuaded to fire up.

An equally unconventional feature on the Lowboy was the front suspension, with the substantially shortened Roadholder fork's stanchions fitted with equally short and very light but much wider springs, external to the fork tubes and protected by rubber gaiters. The fork was carried only by a massive cast lug comprising the lower yoke, with the upper triple clamp eliminated altogether — another Moto Guzzi feature Hele would have been well aware of. The lower end of the steering stem rotates in a large, 1-3/4-inch-diameter Timken tapered bearing, with the upper end a conventional roller bearing. A strut to ensure rigidity under braking is bolted to the rear of the upper stem housing and to

megaphone flattened to an oval shape, ran between the front downtubes and directly beneath the engine, leaving it pointing straight at the rear tire 5 inches away — inevitably leading to jokes about the rear tire heating up quickly! An 18-inch rear wheel lowered the bike even farther, matched to the usual 7-inch single-leading-shoe rear and stock Manx 8-inch twin-leading-shoe front. Fitted with a highly idiosyncratic-looking fairing — "It looks like a bug that someone trod on!" as one comment unkindly described it — the entire bike weighs the same as a standard 1959 350 Manx, at 298 pounds dry.

On board

Invited by Sammy to demo the Lowboy at the annual Goodwood Festival of Speed, I first needed some practice on how to grapple with this unique bike's riding position. You drape yourself over the engine in a straight line to maximize the aerodynamic benefits, but in the absence of a conventional fuel tank there's nothing for your knees to grip to help steer the bike in turns, nor for

you to rest your chest on when tucking away down behind the special cut-down fairing's minimalist screen. No getting away from it — it's a compromised riding stance that asks you to do a handstand all the time you're riding the bike, at least down every straight, which means supporting your upper body weight entirely on your wrists and shoulders.

It feels strange when you hop aboard the Lowboy, because in the absence of the usual fuel tank you can't help but feel the bike isn't ready to be ridden yet — although in spite of the all-enveloping fairing it does feel quite slim as well as, inevitably, low-slung. But flattening yourself out along the frame — on top of the alloy cover that is all that stops your chest from getting roasted by the cambox — brings other problems besides tired wrists. Even with the upper fork yoke deleted, the modified frame's standard steering head remains intact, slap bang in your line of sight. Add in the fact that modern full-face helmets have a lower protective lip compared to a Cromwell pudding basin lid of the 1960 era, and it's even harder to see where you're going: Riding with goggles might have been easier. I was surprised to find I coped OK not having a fuel tank to grip with my knees, because the upper frame rails



Alan Cathcart aboard the Lowboy at the 2016 Goodwood Festival of Speed.



Eddie Crooks and the Lowboy before his solitary practice lap on it (left) and Doug Hele on the bike (right) at the 1960 Junior TT.

of a Wideline Featherbed frame, which the Lowboy's chassis essentially represents, provided something for my knees to brace against in steering through a turn.

Back in the mists of time, I owned and raced a 350 Manx. Just as on that Manx, I found the Lowboy ran well down low before hitting a wall of megaphonitis between 5,000-5,800rpm that made slipping the clutch to overcome this a fact of life. Of course, there's nowhere on the Lowboy to fit a conventional tachometer, so the Smiths tach that adorns it is much smaller than usual, tucked away on the left and angled so you can read it from 5,000 revs upwards. The 4-speed gearbox's one-up right foot shifter was smooth and precise, if rather slow, and shifting up at just under 8,000rpm kept the engine on the pipe, though I had to use the clutch to wind up the revs exiting the tight second-gear Kennels turn at Goodwood.

Even with the reduced travel of the short fork, the Lowboy's long wheelbase meant it handled bumps well, without being too heavy or cumbersome. The Lowboy's low center of gravity would have delivered a comparable advantage — I wonder if Eddie Crooks ever came upon one of the MV Agusta fours on that solitary practice lap, perhaps somewhere truly bumpy back then like Ginger Hall or Windy Corner, and had the chance to test that ability to his satisfaction?

Eddie passed away in 2010, so I can't ask him that now, but Sammy Miller talked to him about the bike after he acquired it.



"Eddie said that it was just too tiring to ride fast for any length of time," he recalls. "On a short circuit you don't take the weight off your wrists for very long, but for a single 37-3/4-mile lap of the TT Course you must rest your body on the tank for at least part of the time, to ease the pressure on your wrists. He said that one lap was quite enough, even if it went very well round fast, sweeping bends like Alpine Cottage or the Verandah. But once was enough — he didn't want to ride it again!"

Given that Dave Chadwick had been of a different opinion after his test on the MIRA bankings, it's evident that the Lowboy was very much an acquired taste. With the restrictions imposed on him by AMC, Doug Hele obviously rightly felt that he had to try every single way of wringing more performance out of his gallant Manx singles. That would have justified the time and money spent building this one-off bike, which as it turned out was just too much of a good thing in terms of its reduced frontal area.

But thanks to the Norton Corner in the Sammy Miller Museum, visitors can inspect all three of Norton's attempts to make their singles more aerodynamic in pursuit of extra speed to keep up with the Italian fours — and BMW twins. The Lowboy is displayed there alongside the earlier Kneeler and the unique F-Type as a reminder of how ingenuity is not always a substitute for money. If the AMC board had permitted Joe Craig to purchase the 4-cylinder, 500cc Nougier engine design conceived in 1953 by race-winning French engineer Jean Nougier, as was indeed in the cards in 1954 after Craig had agreed a price of around £3,000 for the rights to the Nougier engine, none of this would have been necessary, and the Lowboy would never have seen the light of day.

That was indeed a pity — but thanks to Bob Collier and Sammy Miller this abortive prototype has survived for visitors to the museum to study, and for me to marvel at Eddie Crook's bravery in lapping the TT Course at close to 90mph on such a tiring and frankly flawed device. What a hero! **MC**

The Sammy Miller Museum

The Sammy Miller Museum (sammymiller.co.uk) in New Milton, Hampshire, U.K., is crammed full of interesting machines — including factory prototypes and numerous ingenious designs from all over the world. It also counts as one of the world's largest collections of exotic racing bikes, all of them in running order and including the legendary Moto Guzzi 500 V8, the super-charged AJS 500 V4 and post-war Porcupine, and innumerable famous bikes from Triumph, Norton, AJS, Velocette and many more. There are also offroad enduro, motocross and trials icons. The museum is open to visitors daily from 10 a.m. year-round.



1970 Honda CB750 K0

JANUARY

	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31				

February 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
When it first debuted in 1969, the Honda CB750 was a revelation compared to its contemporaries. The CB750 was a powerful, reliable 4-cylinder motorcycle with good brakes, a 5-speed transmission, bright lights and an electric starter that worked on cold mornings. Honda's state-of-the-art tooling enabled the factory to economically produce an engine with a durable one-piece forged crankshaft, a chain-driven overhead camshaft, and a pressure-fed oiling system. To read more, visit MotorcycleClassics.com/CB750						Grounding Day
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
				Valentine's Day		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Presidents Day					
24	25	26	27	28	Classic motorcycles, classic history. classic cool. Subscribe online to <i>Motorcycle Classics</i> magazine and get 6 issues for only \$24.95. Visit MotorcycleClassics.com/2019	

Motorcycle

CLASSICS

2019 CALENDAR

to get out on the road.
Featuring classic brands
such as Moto Guzzi,
Honda, Norton, and
more, this calendar is the
ultimate gift for the true
classic motorcycle fan!

\$19.⁹⁹

Item #9059



Motorcycle

Call 800-880-7567, or visit www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store to order! Mention promo code **MMCPAJZ3**.



THE TWO-WHEELED CAR

Maico Mobil MB200

Story and photos by Andy Westlake

With a 4-speed gearbox, a full windshield, under-seat luggage capacity and trendsetting indicators, it was hardly surprising that the Maico Mobil was classed as a “two-wheeled car” when it was launched at the Reutlingen Show in 1950 in Germany.

Manufactured in 1958, the bike shown here was one of the last of the 200cc singles to emerge from the Maico factory at Wurtemberg in Germany. This MB200 has been owned by scooter enthusiast Simon Balistrari since 2013, and until the day of my visit, it had been parked in Simon and his wife Elaine’s dining room, so this was its first outing on the road. Understandably, both he and I were keen to fire up the 2-stroke and put it into action.

In the beginning

Before we don our helmet and goggles, perhaps we should reflect a little on the history of Maico and the launch of the unusual looking two-wheeler in 1950. For anyone who followed



motocross in the 1970s and 1980s, the Maico brand is often associated with the screaming 2-strokes ridden by the likes of European motocross riders Badger Goss and Adolf Weil to championship honors during those decades.

Maico was founded in 1926 by Ulrich Maisch, initially building bicycles. Ten years later the German company expanded into producing motorcycles, using a 143cc engine manufactured by German 2-stroke specialist ILO-Motorenwerke to power its utilitarian range of lightweight motorcycles. At the end of World War II, with money from the Marshall Plan, Maico built their own range of single and twin-cylinder 2-stroke motorcycles under the name of Blizzard and Typhoon, and these were followed in 1951 by the Mobil.



1958 MAICO MOBIL MB200

Engine: 197cc air-cooled 2-stroke single, 65mm x 59.5mm bore and stroke, 7:1 compression ratio, 11hp @ 5,000rpm
Top speed: 55mph (period test)
Carburetion: Single Bing 2/26/44
Transmission: 4-speed foot shift, chain final drive
Electrics: 6v, coil and breaker points ignition
Frame/wheelbase: Multi-tube space frame, 50.75in (1,289mm)
Suspension: Telescopic forks front, dual shocks rear
Brakes: 5in (127mm) SLS drum front and rear
Tires: 3.25 x 20in front and rear
Weight (w/half gallon fuel): 340lb (154.2kg)
Seat height: 30.5in (775mm)
Fuel capacity/MPG: 2.5gal (9.5ltr)/75mpg (avg./period test)
Price then (U.K.)/now: \$587 (£209)/\$15,000-\$25,000



Exciting new things in motorcycle technology circa 1950: trendsetting "indicators."

Powered by a 148cc 2-stroke engine, the Mobil had aluminum bodywork and fairings built over a tubular space frame, which was unique in terms of both construction and style and owed little to any other two-wheeler. It provided maximum weather protection and carrying capacity for both rider and passenger, and with the fan-cooled engine mounted between the dashboard and the rider's seat, period reporters were hard-pressed to describe it either as a motorcycle or a scooter. Perhaps not surprisingly, it got the title of "the two-wheeled car."

For 1954, the engine capacity was enlarged to 173cc, and a larger 197cc version debuted also, turning out 11 horsepower at 5,000rpm. The bodywork remained the same throughout the Mobil's production span, but the larger 197cc bike saw the 3-speed twist-grip-controlled transmission replaced by a 4-speeder, which was now controlled by a heel-and-toe pedal shifter. The wheels were mounted offset to make for an easy change of wheels in the event of a puncture, with a spare tucked away in the rear bodywork. Front suspension was a telescopic fork, while at the rear a comfortable ride for both the pilot and passenger was provided by a set of twin shocks along with a plush sprung rubber Pagusa seat.

With a 2.5-gallon gas tank, the Mobil was ideally suited for touring, and as early as 1953 Willem Dussel completed a circumnavigation of the world on his comprehensively equipped MB200. The combined weight of driver, luggage and machine was a staggering 660 pounds. There's no doubt that even in its standard specification — the coachwork alone weighs in at 253 pounds — the MB200 was a heavy beast. Still, it could maintain a comfortable 50mph cruising speed with little or no protestation from the 2-stroke single, as proven by *Motor Cycle* in its October 1956 review of the model.

Unlike most scooters, the fuel tank is mounted in front of the rider under the



A pair of twin shocks hide inside the rear bodywork, adding comfort.



The fairing and large wraparound windshield provide a surprising amount of coverage in times of adverse weather (above).

dashboard, which also contains a handy glove box, ignition switch and a gear indicator in the speedometer. This leaves room for a pair of cavernous panniers under the seat to carry your weekly shopping.

Compared to much of the opposition, the Mobil was undoubtedly one of the most luxurious scooters built during the 1950s, but its radical looks and high price meant that it wasn't a huge seller. Today, however, it is highly prized and regarded by aficionados as the "Holy Grail" of small two-wheelers. Getting one of the rare MB200s had been high on Simon's wish list for years.

"I've always regarded the Maico Mobil as the ultimate scooter," Simon says, "and after missing out on two that came up for sale I decided to put an advert in *Old Bike Mart* under the 'wanted' column. My request was spotted by Peter Whittle, who informed me that he had this bike, which had formerly been restored by Robin Spalding. After agreeing to a price, it joined my collection in January 2013.

"It was originally sold by the supplying dealers W.J. Harris in Boscombe in 1958, and the first owner of the then gray and black scooter was a chap by the name of John Cheeseman. It was originally registered under the number of XEL 340, but sometime in its life

this was changed to NVS 905. From the comprehensive restoration log compiled by Robin, which includes invoices of all of the restoration work, and the old log book, I've been able to ascertain that I am only the fourth registered owner and that, if the odometer is to be believed, it has only done just over 4,000 miles from new."



Current owner Simon Balistrari and his Maico.

Before restoration

Previous owner Robin Spalding says that he bought the Maico in 2002 in rough but complete condition, and confirms that the mileage is correct. "I understand that very early in the bike's history it went back to the dealer, who used it for a while. It was then laid up before going to auction in 1992. Another decade passed before I bought it. Thankfully, it was all there, as I believe there are only eight or nine others registered in the U.K. and spares are extremely difficult to find. Over the next few months it was totally rebuilt by a good friend of mine, now retired. He did all of the paintwork and stripped and totally rebuilt the engine for me. He did a fantastic job and the finished scooter looked better than the day it rolled off the production lines. But as I live in an area surrounded by narrow and sometimes muddy lanes, I decided it was too good to



The full-size spare tire is stored at the rear of the bike (above). The single door under the rear seat opens to access storage.

use, and it stayed in my collection until some years later when I sold it to Peter Whittle." The Mobil didn't cover any more miles in Peter's ownership, and it would be another four and a half years before it made its inaugural trip out onto the roads.

On the road

Getting the Mobil started is fairly easy using the left-side kickstarter, but as was noted in *Motor Cycle's* period road test, due to the width of the footboards it is easier to use the kickstarter while standing on the left-hand side. There's no electric starter fitted, but if the carburetor is primed and the choke closed, from cold it is just a one-prod affair to bring the 2-stroke single singing into life. The exhaust note from the long silencer is very subdued, and as we headed off along the road — Simon on the Maico and me close behind on my modern Triumph — the engine on the Mobil quickly cleared its throat and it was obvious that the owner was having a lot of fun on his long-awaited ride. As we stopped at our prearranged photo shoot the smile on Simon's face spoke a thousand words.

Here's Simon's appraisal of that first outing on his 60-year-old scooter: "Starting it is a piece of cake. I can see how when they tested a similar bike back in the 1950s they made comments about the weight and the fact that with no electric starter and a fairly difficult-to-use heel-and-toe gear lever the Mobil was not ideally suited to a lady rider. That said, the fairing and the large wraparound screen would offer superb protection in adverse weather. The large seat is incredibly comfortable and the cavernous under-seat compartment is perfect to carry your weekly shopping or your touring gear. Thanks to the decent suspension and the large, 14-inch wheels, the handling feels very stable. It was great to have indicators — not many bikes had those in the mid-1950s — and the brakes are more than up to bringing the 340 pounds of bike plus rider to a controlled halt. Obviously, being

'new' the engine felt a bit tight, but it ran perfectly and I'm sure that when it's fully run in it will be more than capable of keeping up with modern traffic."

Following the Mobil in traffic was a real eye-opener, as from the rear the large tail unit wrapped around the spare tire makes it look a little like the back end of a rocket. It was also interesting seeing the look on pedestrians' faces as we rode past: even for those with no interest in two-wheelers, the Maico Mobil is decidedly different to the run-of-the-mill offerings usually seen on public roads. Whether you look upon it as a motorcycle, a scooter or a two-wheeled car, there is no doubt that it's a fantastic machine, built many years ahead of its time. **MC**



Funky and eye-catching at the same time, the Maico Mobil is an attention-getter.

MODERN TECHNOLOGY FOR VINTAGE MACHINES

G-3S Custom Series Shocks

- Custom Built to Order
- Made to Any Length
- Choice of Features
- Color Options



Fork Gold Valve Emulators®

Gold Valve Cartridge Emulators
offer Adjustable Damping!

Race Tech Hi-Performance Fork Springs

- Springs available in a variety of Spring Rates.

Brake Arcing

Greatly Improves
Drum Brake
Stopping Power!

TNK Fork Tubes

Made in Italy. Call or go to the
website for your application.

RACE TECH

VINTAGE SUSPENSION

racetech.com | 951.279.6655

ENGINE SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE

Circle #6; see card pg 81

Easy - Affordable - Effective Leather Care Lotions

- Revives the glossy appearance on leather with a high shine
- Safe for colored leather including white leather

- Conditions coated non-glossy leather of all colors

- Can be used on oil tanned leather for no color change



Condition
Preserve
Protect
PECARD
LEATHER CARE COMPANY



MADE IN THE USA SINCE 1902

More info at: WWW.PECARD.COM

Circle #4; see card pg 81



NEW EXHIBIT OPENING FEBRUARY 2019 FEATURING:
1911 STECO AERO-HYDROPLANE AND CYCLE CARS

Plus early motorcycles, bicycles, pedal cars and MORE!

Have a pre-1920 machine to loan? Call 319.480.3288 or 614.551.0960



Opening Soon!

WWW.NATIONALMCMUSEUM.ORG

102 Chamber Drive, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 • 319-462-3925

THE NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM IS A NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) CORPORATION.

Circle #3; see card pg 81

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS STREET BIKES OF THE '60s!

Revel in these classic bikes!

RIDE 'EM, DON'T HIDE 'EM
Motorcycle
CLASSICS

STREET
BIKES
OF THE '60s

SPECIAL
COLLECTOR
EDITION



ONLY **\$6.99!**

Call 800-880-7567, or visit
www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store
to order!

Mention code MMCPAJZ3
Item #8461

THE WORLD'S FINEST MOTORCYCLE LEATHERS

Built in the USA Since 1947

Langlitz Leathers



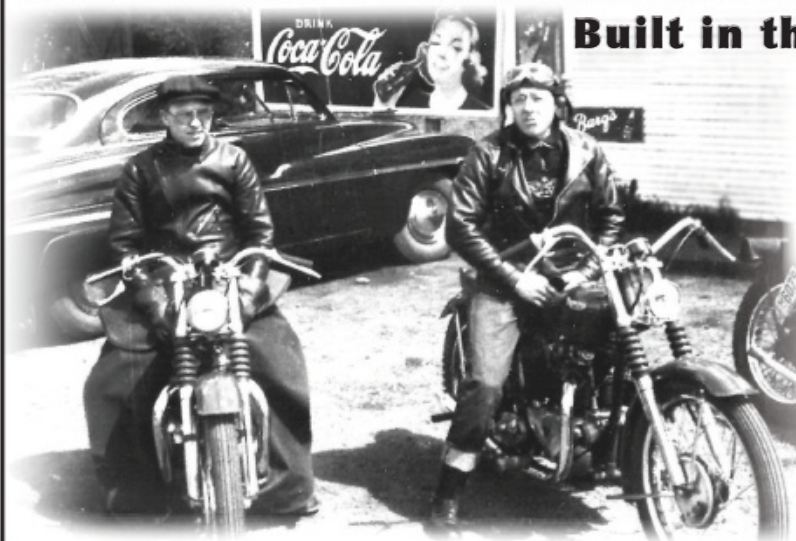
2443 SE Division
Portland, OR 97202

www.langlitz.com

For a Catalog:

503-235-0959

mcc@langlitz.com



VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE PRINTS FROM PHOTO ARTIST DANIEL PEIRCE

Call 800-880-7567 or visit
www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store

Mention code MMCPAJZ6

Motorcycle
CLASSICS





Peter Burtis (left) and friends came across this buckled road on CR P, north of La Farge, Wisconsin.

TWALD 2018

Buckled asphalt, flooded roads and good times

Story by Bob Burns

TWALD is all about old bikes. Anyone can go for a weekend's ride on something that left the factory a few years ago. But to do it on a bike that is as old or even older than you are? That takes dedication and enthusiasm — and maybe a small amount of poor decision making. So you're going to catch a little flak if you show up on something you bought last Thursday. And if you have the audacity to trailer a modern bike to TWALD? You're in for some humiliation in front of 80 of your closest friends.

TWALD 2018 turned out to be a great time, despite Wisconsin's Driftless region being slammed by the second 100-year flood in the last 10 years. Road closures and destroyed bridges made for some interesting detours for those of us on street bikes, while the people on dual sports had a great time ignoring the "road closed" signs.

As always, there were incidents you only get when you try to take a bunch of old motorcycles far from home. Timing mechanisms became maladjusted. Drive chains became absent. Fuel filters got clogged. Ducatis acted Italian. Issues were dealt with via measures both extreme, mundane and occasionally hilarious. And if that failed, bikes got put in various vans and trailers

to return next year.

Happily, zero road incidents took place, with nothing requiring medical or legal attention. Joe Block's Saturday cookout was a giant success, sending riders into southwest Wisconsin's roads heavier than when they came. And the weekend-ending party featured chili a bit spicier than expected. The annual "Walk in the Woods" was scarier than usual, with no fewer than four hidden musicians making spooky soundtrack music for those making the trek into the unknown. Meanwhile, at the Sands Hotel, several hundred beer cans met their fate at the hands of accomplished BB gun snipers.

Of course none of us could avoid the sights of destruction and heartbreak for the folks affected by the flooding. But with a brief mention of their plight at the bonfire party, we raised good money for the 2018 Flood Relief Fund, a local charity helping people get back on their feet — easily. The quality people that show up for this event will do quality things for other folks.

Most importantly, we all had a good time. We stuffed some clothes in a bag, got on our bikes, and we got out of town and out of our lives, if only for a little while. That's important. For a few days we weren't IT technicians, engineers, business owners, truck drivers or parents. We were just a bunch of motorcyclists. And mechanics-ish. **MC**

PETER BURTTIS



BRADY POLOWY (2)



Fuel for riders at a stop in Hebron, Illinois (left). Lunch at Joe Block's Hidden Acres brings out bikes of all stripes (right).



BRETT KURTZ (2)



Bring waterskis: SR 131, north of Steuben, Wisconsin (left). Historic flooding made this picnic table the high water mark (right).



CABE LANZA

Things to do in Dodgeville, Wisconsin? Visit the Boeing C-97G Stratofreighter in front of the Don Q Inn, of course.

Future shock: Hyperpro 360, Ikon 3610 and YSS MZ366 shocks for the BMW K75

BMW K75 shocks

Some enthusiasts might scoff at the notion of including BMW's 1985-1995 K75 triple in a classic motorcycle magazine, but the truth is, it has become something of a classic, and rightly so.

Introduced for the 1985 model year, the K75 was a smaller version of the revolutionary 4-cylinder K100 introduced just two years before, which featured a fuel injected, double overhead cam, water-cooled inline four — lying on its side. Except for its shaft drive, it was unlike any motorcycle BMW had ever made, and rumors quickly circulated that BMW had a smaller companion to the big four in the works. Nobody expected a triple, however, yet for all its visual and technical similarities to the bigger K100, the K75 proved to have its own distinct character.

The K75 range was successful, too, with almost 68,000 manufactured in K75, K75C, K75RT and K75S variants during the model's 10-year production run. Built with typical BMW quality, they are long-lasting, high-mileage machines, a fact that means there are tens of thousands of them still running around. And that brings us to their "classic" status. While traditional riders may not see them in the same light as, say, a Sixties Triumph or a Seventies Norton, their ready availability — and the ready availability of parts for them — makes them strong contenders as everyday mounts. Straddling something of a line between old and new, they are an excellent option for commuting and touring. And with almost 35 years between introduction and today, their mid-1980s styling has acquired a dated yet comfortable old school look.

Every bike has its failings of course, and one of the K75's biggest was the rear Boge monoshock. Softly sprung and under-damped, it was considered a poor performer when new, and today, any owner with a K75 still wearing its original shock should seriously think about replacing it. And while we're big on OEM parts, this is one case where we wouldn't even consider OEM as an option. At just over \$500 from BMW, the stock shock is hardly cheap, and adding insult to injury,



Left to right: Hyperpro 360 (\$569), Ikon 3610 (\$600) and YSS MZ366 (\$389).

they don't work any better than they did 30 years ago. Fortunately, there are excellent options on the market, three of which we tested: the Hyperpro 360, the Ikon 3610 and the YSS MZ366.

On board

The stock Boge has 3-position adjustable preload and non-adjustable rebound damping, typical of the era. In addition to adjustable preload, all three of the tested shocks have adjustable rebound damping, a desirable feature on any bike and essential in our opinion for proper performance on K bikes owing both to their weight — our 1995 K75 test bike comes in at around 515 pounds — and their shaft final drive. Shaft drive can induce so-called "shaft effect," where hard acceleration causes the bike to rise and deceleration makes it fall, upsetting handling. The K bikes (even pre-Paralever models, a feature K75s never got) don't exhibit the effect as badly as some, but the issue becomes particularly evident running poorly damped and under-sprung rear shocks. Fitted to our

1995 K75, the three shocks tested allow fine-tuning preload as well as rebound, mitigating any shaft effect.

Rebound adjustment on all three is a simple matter of turning a dial, located at the bottom of the Hyperpro and YSS shocks and at the top of the Ikon. Of the three, the Ikon's was harder to adjust, but only because the shock mounting bracket on the K75's frame partially obscures the top of the shock, making it hard to access the adjustment dial. This wouldn't be an issue on many bikes, but it is a minor pain on the K75. At the same time, the Ikon was also simpler to tune, owing to its four-position rebound adjustment versus the Hyperpro's 50-position and the YSS' 35-position adjustment, which allow finer tuning while also requiring more experimentation to find that "just right" setting.

Although our tests were literally a seat of the pants assessment, we sampled each shock riding the same 60-mile loop of mixed condition, two-lane roads. In each case, we rode the first half with rebound set as delivered. Then, depending upon our assessment, we adjusted



Clockwise from above: the Hyperpro 360 installed; the Hyperpro's rebound adjuster; the Ikon 3610 installed; the Ikon's rebound adjuster.

the rebound to tailor it to the K75 and the roads we were riding. Not surprisingly, all three of the tested shocks performed light-years better than stock.

Hyperpro 360

First up for our test was the Hyperpro 360. A relative newcomer to the category, Netherlands-based Hyperpro (hyperpro.com) has been making shocks since the early 2000s. Initially focused on high-performance race and sport bikes, the company's offerings have broadened substantially over the ensuing years, with applications for a wide variety of 1970s to the present European and Japanese motorcycles, and Harley-Davidson.

Weighing in at 4 pounds, 8 ounces on our scale, the gas-charged Hyperpro 360 is about 3/4-pound lighter than the stock Boge. Fully rebuildable, its features include a stout 16mm shaft diameter, a progressively wound spring with a screw-collar for preload adjustment, and 50-position rebound damping adjustment. It comes with a five-year warranty.

As delivered (packed in a cool reusable plastic tote), our Hyperpro was sprung for an average 180-200-pound rider, with the rebound set in the middle, 25 clicks from the bottom (fastest rebound). A check of rear suspension sag showed the preload was properly set.

Ride quality on the first half of our loop was generally excellent, yet there was no question the rebound needed to be slowed, the rear wheel tending to bounce over washboards and road irregularities rather than roll over them. With a wide adjustment range as on the Hyperpro, it's a good idea to make broad rather than



fine initial adjustments to get in the ballpark; you're more likely to feel the change and know if you're going the right way. For the return ride, I slowed rebound by five clicks, which made a marked difference in ride quality. The rear wheel tracked cleanly and easily over washboards and road irregularities, greatly enhancing ride quality and control. A bit more experimentation showed that 20-click setting to be ideal.

Ikon 3610

Remember Koni shocks? They're still available, they're just called Ikon, a slight-of-hand name change effected when Australian shock absorber reseller Proven Products acquired the rights to Koni's motorcycle shocks in 2000. In the years since, Ikon (ikonsuspensionusa.com) has continuously upgraded and expanded its line of shocks, with applications for everything from Aprilias to Zündapps.

The 3610 series was designed specifically for single-shock applications like the K75. Weighing in at 7 pounds, 4.6 ounces — almost 2 pounds more than the stock Boge — the fully rebuildable, gas-charged 3610-1009 is a stout piece, and looks it. Features include a 14mm shaft diameter, a progressively wound spring with a screw-collar for preload adjustment, and four-position rebound damping adjustment. It comes with a one-year warranty.

The Ikon came sprung for an aver-



age 180-200-pound rider, and with the rebound set at 1, its fastest setting. Checking rear suspension sag showed preload was properly set.

Ride quality was very good right out of the box, the rear tracking cleanly and delivering an almost plush ride, with little evidence of wanting to jump across washboards. Setting the dial to 3 for the second leg of the ride returned a firmer, more controlled ride, and without any loss in tire contact rolling over rough surfaces.

YSS MZ366

Based in Bang Phli, Thailand, YSS Suspension began building motorcycle shocks in 1983. Twenty years later, YSS (epmperf.com) was supplying shocks for more than 15 motorcycle brands, and is now one of the largest motorcycle shock manufacturers in the world.

The MZ366 slots into YSS' 4G line of gas-charged, rebound adjustable shocks. Specified for monoshock applications, it weighed in at 4 pounds, 5.2 ounces, the lightest in our group. Fully rebuildable, its features include a 16mm shaft diameter, a progressively wound spring with a screw-collar for preload adjustment, and 35-position rebound damping adjustment. It comes with a two-year warranty.

As with the Hyperpro and Ikon, the MZ366 was delivered sprung for an average 180-200-pound rider, and with the rebound set roughly in the middle at 15 clicks from the bottom (fastest rebound). Checking rear suspension sag showed preload was properly set.

Heading out for the first leg of our route it was immediately apparent the MZ366 needed slower rebound to provide the kind of controlled ride we were looking for. On the first leg of our 60-mile loop, the YSS returned a soft, under-damped ride that had the K75 bouncing



The YSS MZ366 installed (far left) and the MZ366's rebound adjuster.

on the worst washboards.

For the return ride, we dialed the MZ366 up five clicks, putting us at 20 of the 35 available. This provided a much improved ride, the back end feeling firmly planted and comfortable, smoothly tracking over washboards. At the end of the return loop, we experimented with slowing rebound just a bit more, settling in at 22 clicks from the bottom. This further

improved the ride, suggesting the YSS has its most nuanced rebound control at the upper end of its adjustment.

All things considered

We're not suspension specialists, so we didn't go into this looking for an outright winner. Rather, we wanted to educate ourselves about available quality shock options and the differences we could perceive between them. The tested shocks are all high-quality units; much better than OEM, and in the case of the YSS, cheaper, too.

We did come away with some conclusions that underscore the individual nature of shock manufacturers and their

specific products. Namely, for two-up riding on the K75, and/or with luggage, the \$600 Ikon 3610 would be our top choice. Built like a tank, our experience suggests it would accommodate increased loads well after fine-tuning both preload and rebound. If most of our riding was sport/solo in nature, we'd definitely lean toward the \$569 Hyperpro 360, which we found easiest to dial in owing to its surprisingly sensitive response to changes in rebound. And if a good ride on a tighter budget was our main criteria, we'd look at the \$389 YSS. Although rebound adjustment sensitivity wasn't as good as on the Hyperpro, it's a solidly built unit that seems more than capable of dealing with the K75's heft, and like the rest of the tested units, miles better than the original.

As a final note, proper spring preload adjustment is critical to good shock performance. To learn more about setting sag, go to MotorcycleClassics.com/sag — *Richard Backus*

The Moving Story of This Woman's 35,000-Mile Solo Adventure

Read the fascinating story behind the woman who went on a 35,000-mile solo adventure around the world! In 1982, at the age of 23, Elspeth Beard left her family and friends in London and set off on her solo trip on a 1974 BMW R60/6. With some savings from her pub job, a tent, a few clothes, and some tools, all packed on the bike, she was determined to prove herself and to get over a recent heartbreak.

By the time she returned to England two years later, she was 30 pounds lighter and decades wiser. She'd ridden through deserts and mountain ranges and war-ravaged countries. She'd faked documents and fended off sexual attacks, biker gangs, and corrupt police who were convinced she was trafficking drugs. She'd survived brutal crashes and life-threatening illnesses, and she'd fallen in love with two very different men. Told with honesty and wit, this is the extraordinary and moving story of a unique and life-changing adventure.

Item #9115 • \$19.95

To order, call 800-880-7567

or visit www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store

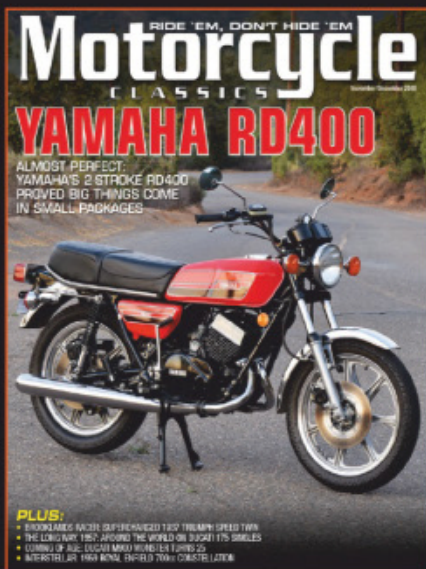
Mention promo code MMCPAJZ3

Motorcycle
CLASSICS

ELSPETH BEARD LONE RIDER

THE FIRST BRITISH WOMAN TO
MOTORCYCLE AROUND THE WORLD





Whether you're a *lifelong motorcycle enthusiast*, a collector or a first-time rider with a taste for the *greatest motorcycles ever made*, this is exactly where you belong.

SUBSCRIBE ONLINE:

Get **6** issues for only

\$24.⁹⁵

That's one complete year
(6 issues) of **Motorcycle Classics**.
Use promo code HMCHSJZX.

Motorcycle
CLASSICS

www.MotorcycleClassics.com/special

Motorcycle
CLASSICS

FREE INFORMATION
FROM OUR ADVERTISERS

Please circle the number(s) on the attached Reader Service Card to indicate the information requested. Information is free unless otherwise indicated on this page.

DISPLAY

PAGE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Baxter Cycle | 88 |
| 2. Donelson | 90 |
| 3. National Motorcycle Museum | 88 |
| 4. Pecard Leather Care Co | 75 |
| 5. Providence Products | 63 |
| 6. Race Tech | 75 |
| 7. Rick's Motorsport | 88 |
| 8. Vanson Leathers | 63 |

IFC = Inside Front Cover
OBC = Outside Back Cover

IBC = Inside Back Cover
Expires February 28, 2020

RIDES AND DESTINATIONS

SANDY HOOK, THE ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS, AND THE GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

A ride along the Jersey shore is a different kind of motorcycle adventure. It's not focused on twisties or mountain scenery. Instead, your ride north on the Jersey shore will showcase magnificent seaside homes on the left, the mighty Atlantic Ocean on the right, and the sounds and smells of boardwalks, pizza, salt air, and what can only be described as the best seafood in the world. Any motorcycle will do, but it's sometimes a slow putt through surface street traffic (New Jersey is our most densely populated state).

A good day ride is to find your way to Point Pleasant along SR 34 and SR 35, turning left when you hit the ocean and following Ocean Avenue north along the eastern edge of our continent. The highway numbers change as you go north, but the Ocean Avenue moniker mostly stays the same. You will veer inland a few times (not all of the area's many inland waterways have bridges), but stick to the coast and continue north. You'll pass through Manasquan, Belmar, Asbury Park (yep, of Bruce Springsteen fame), Deal (where the rich people live), Monmouth Beach, Sea Bright, and then you'll arrive at our destination for this trip: the Atlantic Highlands, Sandy Hook, Fort Hancock, and the Gateway National

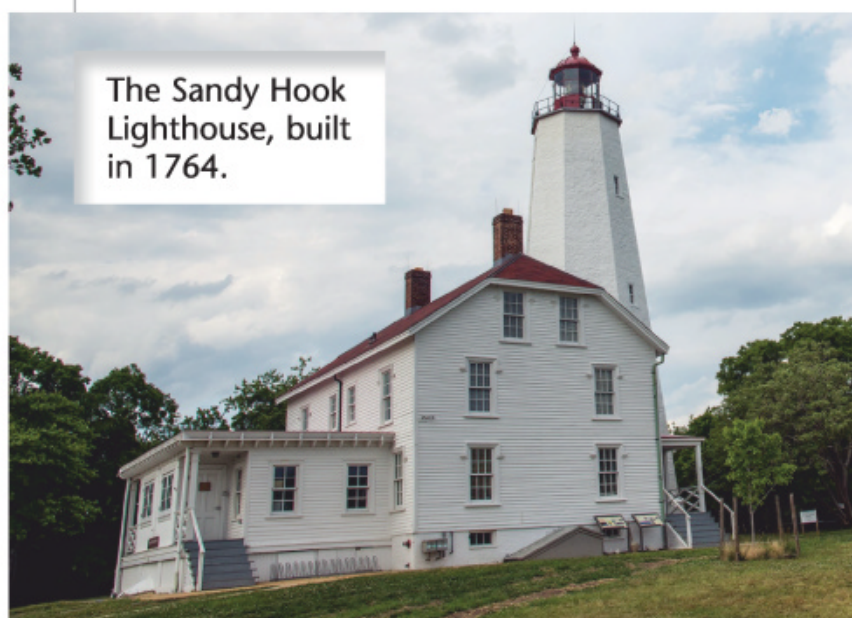
Recreation Area. It's a strategic region, as it controls the sea and air lanes of the greater New York metropolitan area. This region played key roles during the American Revolution and all that followed. Of tremendous military significance, it was also a haven for bootleggers during Prohibition.

The Atlantic Highlands (that's the region, the town itself is called Highlands) hugs Sandy Hook Bay, directly opposite New York City. This is the highest point south of Maine on our eastern seaboard, with hills that rise nearly 300 feet above the Atlantic. As you ride through Highlands, grab East Highland Avenue and then Scenic Drive, which take you directly to Mt. Mitchill and its commanding views of Fort Hancock, Sandy Hook Bay and New York City. There's a 9/11 monument at the peak (the Twin Towers and their destruction were clearly visible from here). The monument is a large eagle clutching a Twin Towers I-beam, and if you look closely, you'll see a tear in its eye. Names of local residents who perished that day are inscribed on the base.

Retrace your ride back south to the intersection of SR 36 and the southern end of Sandy Hook Bay, exit right, and follow the signs to Fort Hancock and the Gateway National Recreation Area. You'll

turn onto Hartshorne Road, named for the man who owned this area and turned it over to the U.S. government in 1806. At the very tip stands the oldest operating lighthouse in the United States, the Sandy Hook Lighthouse, built in 1764.

The Gateway National Recreation Area includes old Fort Hancock, an army base that dates to the 1800s. The area was an Army proving grounds for monstrous coastal artillery pieces, as one of Fort Hancock's first missions was to protect New York from seaborne invaders. There are numerous weapons on display, including Battery Potter, a unique concept with huge underground guns raised via steam power into their firing positions. As the threat evolved, so did Fort Hancock's weaponry. During the Cold War, Fort Hancock shifted its focus from the ocean to the skies. It became an anti-aircraft installation, first with 90mm and 120mm anti-aircraft guns, and later with Nike Ajax and Nike Hercules missiles. On the ride in, you'll pass between both missiles, proudly displayed on either side of Hartshorne Road. Fort Hancock was decommissioned in 1974, but the old post still remains as a key component of the Gateway National Recreation Area, and a portion of it still serves as a U.S. Coast Guard base. — Joe Berk



THE SKINNY

What: Sandy Hook, the Atlantic Highlands, and the Gateway National Recreation Area.

How to Get There: Pick up New Jersey SR 36 anywhere along the Jersey shore, and head north (if you're south of Sandy Hook), or south (if you're north of Sandy Hook).

Best Kept Secret: Bahrs Landing in Highland. Try anything on the menu; everything is magnificent. If you want something truly special, lobster preceded by a cup of clam chowder is just what the doctor ordered.

Avoid: Leaving without checking the weather: New Jersey can get cold and icy during the winter.

More Photos: bit.ly/nj-shore

More Info: nps.gov/gate/index.htm



ITEM #9106
\$6.99

We bring you our latest special collector edition of *Motorcycle Classics* with
TALES FROM THE ROAD!

This 96-page guide is the next best thing to actually hopping on your bike and taking a long road trip with no particular destination in mind. Filled with stories of people who have ridden through places from the Big Sur coast in California to Australia, the issue will motivate you to get on your bike and take a ride. Packed with pictures of the riders' travels and routes, this issue will help you see the beauty of different places from the view of a bike.

Included in this issue:

- Hippie Highway: Istanbul to Kathmandu – Writer Clement Salvadori tracks his memorable 1973 trip riding the Hippie Highway aboard a 1972 BMW R75/5.
- Vintage Touring, Italian Style – Exploring the heart of Italy on vintage Benellis with the keepers of the Benelli flame from Registro Storico Benelli.
- Here Goes Something – 3,754 miles and 38 days on a 1973 Honda CB750.
- The Honeymoon Ride – A pair of newlyweds venture from Los Angeles across the desert and on to Utah, Wyoming, and eventually Chicago aboard a pair of 1973 Hondas, a CB750 and a CB350.
- And more!

To order, call 800-880-7567, or visit
www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store
Mention promo code MMCPAJZ3

“You have to remember that at the time these were just motorcycles.”

Triumph wiring

Q: I recently acquired a 1977 Triumph Bonneville Silver Jubilee. The engine number does not match the bike. I was able to contact the owner and he told me the engine was replaced by the Triumph dealer under warranty after only 200 miles because of a poor engine case casting causing oil to leak in on the points. Have you ever come across this? The dealer, Free State Cycle in Bladensburg, Maryland, is no longer in business, so I can't contact them for confirmation. Any help would be appreciated. The bike has been sitting for a number of years and it is going to take some work to get it back on the road. I enjoy the challenge. There is nothing more satisfying than hearing a long dead engine fire up. Also, do you know when Triumph went negative ground?

Chuck/via email

A: At one time, dealers had access to unstamped cases for situations like this, but by 1977, with all the troubles Triumph was having, maybe they weren't available anymore, or it was just easier and less expensive to do an engine swap. Today, we prize matching numbers, but you have to remember that at the time these were just motorcycles; no one was thinking they would be collectible someday. About the only thing you can do is just ride it and enjoy it. Sorry I can't be more helpful. As to your second question, it looks like 1979 was the first year for negative ground. Triumph changed the shape of the regulator and they note in the parts list that it is negative ground and not interchangeable with earlier regulators. And I agree: Hearing one of these old beasts come back to life is inspiring. When I work on one for someone else, the look on their face when they hear it start up for the first time is priceless.

Under water

Q: I have a 1972 BSA B50MX that was under water for 72 hours or more back in 1997 due to a river flood in Dallas, Texas. The owner couldn't turn it over after several attempts, and at that point he just quit and sold it to me. He impressed upon me the main bearings were steel and must be replaced. It's been on the back burner ever since. I'm hesitant to turn it over to



Ready to take your classic queries: Old-bike mechanic Keith Fellenstein.

someone without knowing what it really needs. I believe I could do it, but I also know older bikes have tricks you don't get in manuals. Do you have any suggestions?

Jerry Weber/Florida

A: Jerry, this sounds like something that won't respond to my usual mix of solvents to free up an engine. You will probably have to use Evapo-Rust or Metal Rescue or something similar and allow them time to work their magic. Remove the spark plug and fill the cylinder and also fill the sump via the rocker boxes and pushrod tubes. Give it a week or so and drain the sump so as to not hydro lock the engine when trying to turn it over. Pull off the primary cover and using a proper sized socket on the crank nut, gently try turning the engine over. If it moves at all reverse the ratchet and go back the other way. Carefully working back and forth you should be able to free the engine enough to get things rotating. Don't go too far though. Once you have the piston and crank bearings loose, you'll have to do a complete overhaul as those main bearings will be useless from corrosion, as will many other moving, rotating and sliding parts.

Petcock questions

Q: I have converted a half-dozen 1974 to 1976 Honda CB550s to café racers. The first two went to my two sons. My current problem revolves around the petcock on a 1974

tank. This particular unit is specific to the 1974 model. Later years used a 20mm bung and a completely different style petcock. The original had a rusted out bowl, so I purchased a repro from a reputable supplier. I always test new components before installing them. On the bench I have the tank full of fuel, petcock installed and a catch basin underneath. When the unit is put in reserve or on, the fuel flows out of one port only. I am sure you are familiar with the 4-carb setup on the little CB's, each port supplies two carbs in the set. If I put my finger over the flowing port, the other starts to dispense fuel. I can move my finger back and it starts to flow out of the open port. The engine will not run properly with this problem. Two carbs in the set are always short on fuel.

I had this problem on another 1974 tank on a build several years back. It was solved by cutting out the petcock mount and attaching a bung from a 1975 tank. Then I installed a 1975 petcock. I would like to keep this bike as stock as possible, so I am taking some time to try to solve this problem. The supplier is sending me an OEM part to replace the repro, and I am hoping for a good result — two ports flowing simultaneously. Based on the problems encountered on the last 1974 that I worked on, I fear that the OEM unit will not help. Is it possible that the system is designed to fill two carbs and then switch to filling the other two? I can't see how this would work, particularly at any throttle opening above half? Any thoughts you have would be greatly appreciated. I always look forward to your column.

Gerald Delaney/via email

A: I think that once the carburetor bowls are full and all the air bubbles work their way back up to the petcock and tank, the lines from the petcock will act more like a siphon and hydraulic pull will cause them to both flow evenly. You could test this by hooking the petcock up to the carburetors and remove the bowls from one carburetor on each feed line. Holding the floats up on the open carburetors should allow the other two to fill and stop the flow. You could then release the open bowl floats and see if they drain an equal amount over time into separate containers.

Email questions to
keithsgarage@motorcycleclassics.com

HARBOR FREIGHT

QUALITY TOOLS AT RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICES

900 Stores Nationwide • HarborFreight.com

SUPER COUPON

EARTHQUAKE XT BEATS Snap-on*

1/2" HIGH TORQUE AIR IMPACT WRENCH



Customer Rating
★★★★★

EARTHQUAKE
EQ12XT

1190 FT. LBS.	TORQUE BOLT BREAKAWAY	1190 FT. LBS.
1210	BLOWS PER MINUTE	1270
YES	LOW SOUND LEVEL	YES
YES	ONE-HANDED FORWARD/REVERSE	YES
4.4 LBS.	WEIGHT	4.2 LBS.



Snap-on
PT850

NOW
\$129.99

SAVE
\$469

\$149.99 **PRICE** **\$599.95**



94719709

*Snap-on PT850 stated specs

ITEM 62891

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

FREE

PITTSBURGH

WITH ANY PURCHASE

1" X 25 FT. TAPE MEASURE

- Thumb Lock
- Rubber Wrapped Case



COMPARE TO
KOMELO

\$6.98

LIFETIME WARRANTY

ITEM 69030

47737/69031 shown



94719707

Cannot be used with other discounts or prior purchases. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/18/19 while supplies last. Limit 1 FREE GIFT per customer per day.

FREE

20% OFF

ANY SINGLE ITEM*



94719419

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. *Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Inside Track Club membership, Extended Service Plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day Parking Lot Sale item, compressors, floor jacks, saws, saw mills, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, trencher/backhoe, welders, Adrenal, Ames, Baxer, Cobra, CoverPro, Dayton, Diamondback, Earthquake, Fischer, Hercules, Ikon, Jupiter, Lynx, Pallas, Predator, Tanglefoot, Viking, Vulcan, Zurich. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/18/19.

PITTSBURGH

SUPER COUPON

1000 LB. CAPACITY MOTORCYCLE LIFT

- Diamond plate steel platform and ramp
- Lift range: 7" to 29-1/2"

Customer Rating
★★★★★



NOW
\$299.99

~~\$399.99~~

COMPARE TO
DIRECT-LIFT

\$799.99

SAVE \$500

ITEM 69904/68892 shown



94721985

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

CENTECH

SUPER COUPON

AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER



Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$4.99

~~\$9.99~~

SAVE 50%

ITEM 69594/69955/64284/42292 shown



94722849

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

PREDATOR

SUPER COUPON

8750 MAX. STARTING/7000 RUNNING WATTS 13 HP (420 CC) GAS GENERATOR



Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$529.99

~~\$599.99~~

GFCI outlets

SUPER QUIET

COMPARE TO HONDA

\$2,599

MODEL: EB6500X1AT

Wheel kit and battery sold separately.

ITEM 63086/68530/63085 shown

ITEM 68525/63088/63087

CALIFORNIA ONLY

SAVE \$2,069



94723802

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

HARDY

SUPER COUPON

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES PACK OF 100

- 5 mil thickness

12¢ PER PAIR

SAVE 59%

Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW \$5.99

~~\$7.99~~

COMPARE TO VENOM

\$14.97

MODEL: VEM145

ITEM 37050, 37051, 37052, 64417, 64418, 61363, 68497, 61360, 61359, 68498, 68496 shown



94724237

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

SUPER COUPON

7 FT. 4" X 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP



Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$2.99

~~\$4.99~~

COMPARE TO BLUE HAWK

\$9.98

SAVE 70%

ITEM 69115/69121/69129/69137/69249/877 shown



94724279

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

SUPER COUPON

29 GALLON, 2 HP, 150 PSI CAST IRON VERTICAL OIL-LUBE AIR COMPRESSOR



- Air delivery: 5.9 SCFM @ 90 PSI, 7.3 SCFM @ 40 PSI

Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$329.99

~~\$359.99~~

COMPARE TO EASTWOOD

\$379.99

SAVE \$50

MODEL: 31915

ITEM 61489/62765/68127 shown



94724591

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

WARRIOR

SUPER COUPON

3 PIECE TITANIUM HIGH SPEED STEEL STEP BITS

- Drill 28 hole sizes from 1/8" to 3/4"

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 85%

NOW \$8.99

~~\$12.99~~

COMPARE TO IRWIN

\$59.98

MODEL: 15504PKSM

ITEM 69087/60379/91616 shown



94726344

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

PITTSBURGH

SUPER COUPON

RAPID PUMP® 3 TON STEEL HEAVY DUTY LOW PROFILE FLOOR JACK

- Weighs 73 lbs.



Customer Rating
★★★★★

COMPARE TO TEQ

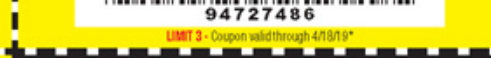
\$149.99

SAVE \$70

MODEL: TB3001BZ

ITEM 64264/64266/64879/64881

61282/62326/61253 shown



94727486

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

COVERPRO

SUPER COUPON

10 FT. X 17 FT. PORTABLE GARAGE



Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$169.99

~~\$199.99~~

COMPARE TO SHELTER LOGIC

\$270

SAVE \$100

MODEL: 76377

ITEM 62859/63055/62860 shown



94728240

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

PITTSBURGH

SUPER COUPON

PNEUMATIC ADJUSTABLE ROLLER SEAT



- 300 lb. capacity

Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$19.99

~~\$26.99~~

SAVE 69%

COMPARE TO DURALAST

\$64.99

MODEL: TR6201C

ITEM 61160/61896/63456/46319 shown



94728700

LIMIT 7 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

YUKON

SUPER COUPON

46" MOBILE STORAGE CABINET WITH SOLID WOOD TOP

- 15,704 cu. in. of storage
- 1200 lb. capacity

Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$229.99

~~\$249.99~~

COMPARE TO FRONTIER

\$299

SAVE \$69

MODEL: XTB4602B

ITEM 64023

64012 shown



94728940

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

SUPER COUPON

4 PIECE ANTI-FATIGUE FOAM MAT SET

- Each pad measures 25" x 25"

Customer Rating
★★★★★



NOW
\$6.99

~~\$8.99~~

COMPARE TO NORSK

\$19.99

SAVE 65%

MODEL: 001119346

ITEM 40187/61607

62389/94635 shown



94730029

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

SUPER COUPON

200 LUMENS LED SUPER BRIGHT FLIP LIGHT

- Wireless, tool-free and easy installation

Customer Rating
★★★★★

NOW
\$2.99

~~\$4.99~~

COMPARE TO PREMIER

\$6

MODEL: SW-SWITCH-12/24

ITEM 64189/64723/63922 shown



94730260

LIMIT 8 - Coupon valid through 4/18/19*

BADLAND

SUPER COUPON

12,000 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

- Weighs 83.65 lbs.
- 21" L x 10-1/8" H



NOW
\$299.99

~~\$399.99~~

SAVE \$400

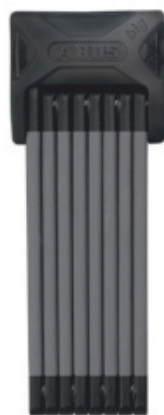
New Stuff for Old Bikes

From new vintage sidecars to improved Norton fork bushings, here are six cool products every classic bike fan should know about.



TP Tools parts washer

TP Tools is best known for its extensive line of media blast cabinets and related accessories like HVLP paint systems and air compressors, but the Ohio-based company also carries a wide selection of quality shop accessories like this 5-liter bench-top parts washer. Measuring 5 inches deep and 12 inches in diameter, it's perfect for soaking small parts, and its closeable lid allows you to leave parts soaking without worrying about spillage or contamination. Features a removable bottom screen and fire safety link. \$39. More info: tptools.com



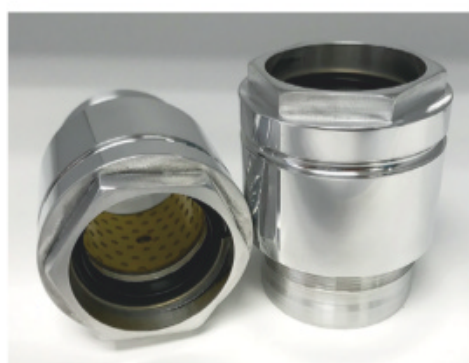
BORDO Big 6000 lock

German lock experts ABUS have reimagined the motorcycle lock with the BORDO Big 6000. Combining the security of a U-lock with the flexibility of a chain, the lock features temper hardened steel bars encased in a non-scratch coating. The 3-pound lock's unique folding technology lets it unfold to wrap around a bike, yet it takes up less space when folded up for storage than a traditional chain or cable lock. \$149.99. More info: abus.com/us



Watsonian sidecars

A fixture in England during the post-war years, Watsonian sidecars are still produced by Watsonian Squire, and they're available in the U.S. through the Ohio-based sidecar enthusiasts at The Workshop, which handles a full line of sidecars including the classic Watsonian Squire Grand Prix. Introduced in 1966, the Grand Prix has the signature and timeless Watsonian octagonal nose first used by Watsonian in 1930. At 198 pounds it weighs no more than the average male rider, and can be attached to almost any motorcycle, vintage or modern. \$7,212. More info: workshop.com



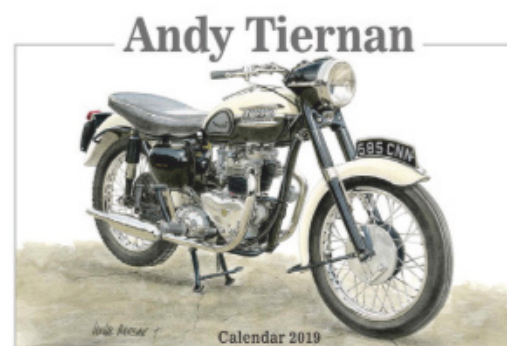
Commando fork upgrade

Norton Commando forks are prone to "stiction" — the fork tube binds on the bushing instead of sliding. The stock bushings are an issue, aggravated by the Commando's short fork lowers, which put a high load on the upper bushings. Colorado Norton Works now supplies a bushing/fork seal extension made with a machineable plastic bushing and replaceable two-lip seal. The CNW extension is a screw-in replacement with no modifications: simply remove the stock bushing and seal and replace the stock retaining cap with the CNW unit. Neat. \$198.95. More info: coloradonortonworks.com



Vanson Compass jacket

Massachusetts-based Vanson Leathers is known for its top-quality leather gear, but the company has expanded its offerings with a line of fabric jackets. Made in the U.S. of 10.10-ounce breathable, water-repellent Army Duck waxed cotton, the Compass Touring was designed with warm weather riding in mind, yet its included Streamliner Vest means it's still perfect when the weather suddenly turns chilly. Easy to maintain, it can be hosed off and air-dried, and the hip-length cut ensures riding comfort. Available in tan (shown) and black. \$549. More info: vansonleathers.com



Andy Tiernan calendar

The 2019 Andy Tiernan Classics calendar showcases great postwar British twins, with stunning lead pencil and water color artwork by Mike Harbar. Featured bikes include a 350cc 1951 Douglas Mk V, a 650cc 1962 BSA Rocket Gold Star, a 650cc 1959 Triumph Tiger 110 and more. Important dates in the U.K. classic bike scene are noted, and all proceeds from calendar sales go to the East Anglian Air Ambulance, a non-profit ambulance service that has saved the lives of many motorcyclists. \$13 (approx.). More info: andybuysbikes.com

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS ARCHIVE 2005-2017 USB DRIVE

Bringing you the most brilliant, unusual and popular motorcycles ever made ... delivered on a flash drive that plugs into the USB port on your favorite device. Whether you're interested in a particular manufacturer or repairing a specific part, use our search function to bring up all of *Motorcycle Classics'* relevant content! For collectors and enthusiasts, dreamers and restorers, newcomers and lifelong gearheads, we have you well covered.

ORDER TODAY!

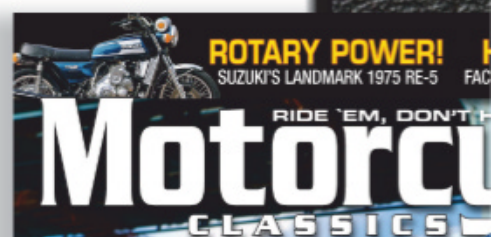
Call (800) 880-7567 or order online at
www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store

Mention promo code MMCPAJZ1

\$25

ITEM #8643

Price does not include shipping and handling.



Motorcycle CLASSICS



DOC'S Est. 1969

Custom Derby Covers Motorcycle Parts & More

www.docsmc.com

10% OFF On-line Order Promo Code: Classic

Or Call **203-757-0295**

BAXTER Cycle
YOUR BRITISH BIKE SUPERSTORE
• PARTS • SERVICE • SALES •
 OVER 19,600 PART #S ONLINE
 140+ FREE ONLINE PARTS BOOKS
 WE SHIP WORLDWIDE!!
712-781-2351
WWW.BAXTERCYCLE.COM

Circle #1; see card pg 81

B50/CCM Specialist
We specialize in BSA, Triumph and Norton
 Cylinder head porting
 Valve seats installed
 Cranshaft lightening and balancing
 Case repairing
 Cylinder boring
 JE Pistons
 Boyer Ignitions
 Carrillo Rods
 PVL Ignitions
E&V ENGINEERING
 19294 W. M46
 Howard City, MI 49329
 eveng@pathwaynet.com
 www.evengineering.com
 231 937 6515
 Mon-Fri 10am-9pm
 Sat 10am-5pm

RICK'S MOTORSPORT ELECTRICS
 1-800-521-0277
 New Lithium-Ion friendly rec/regs for vintage bikes!
 Designed with **BALLISTIC** PERFORMANCE COMPONENTS
 WE SPEAK VINTAGE
RICK'S MOTORSPORT ELECTRICS

Circle #7; see card pg 81

ROCKY POINT CYCLE
BMW 2, 5, 6, 7 • Norton Commando
 Mikuni/Dell Orto carburetor conversion kits
 Boyer & TriSpark electronic ignitions
 Stainless steel fastener kits and singles (metric/SAE/Cei)
 Restorations/Customs engines/transmissions
978-212-5432
 Generally 10AM to 5PM EST
www.rockypointcycle.com

BAXLEYCOMPANIES.COM
 Made in USA
MX CHOCK
 (BUILT FOR NARROW TIRES)
 Also: **SPORT CHOCK LA CHOCK SCOOTER CHOCK**
Patented
(888) 988-8833

Circle #5; see card pg 81

5thGearParts.Com

5thGearParts.com
 Used Honda and Yamaha parts.
 No Auctions, No guess work,
 No delays. Quality used parts guaranteed.
 Lots of 80's Honda stuff.
Email: 5thGearParts@gmail.com
Web: 5thGearParts.com

U.S. CHROME
 PERFORMANCE COATINGS
VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE CYLINDER PLATING
 Nicom™ Plating & Diamond Honing.
 Abradeable Piston Coatings.
 PRESERVE YOUR BORE SIZE!!!
 • Plating on Aluminum and Cast Iron
 • Vastly Improved Durability and Geometry
 • World's Hardest Cylinder Bore Since 1979
Toll Free 866-922-5066
www.usnicom.com
 US Chrome Corporation
 650 Oak Park Ave.
 Fond du Lac, WI 54935

K.M. Jones Enterprises LLC
 Parts & Spares For Classic Triumph Motorcycles
TRIUMPH MOTORCYCLE PARTS
 NOS, New, Used
 Genuine AMAL, Lucas and more.
 Name brand UK made parts
 We have a special emphasis on
 "Oil-In-Frame" Triumph 650/750 Twins.
785-925-2042
kmjonesmotorsports.com

406
Quality
PLATING
QP

Established in 1976
We do Aluminum Polishing, Zinc Plating, Show Chrome finishes and much more, including motorcycle restoration parts!
Call us now at
815-626-5223 or fax 815-626-5244.
Visit: www.qualitychromeplating.com

Norton Commando Electric Start Kit

Some things are worth the wait. Over forty years after the first Commando appeared, the Alton EKit electric start conversion finally brings it to life at the touch of a button.

Available in the US from
The Classic Bike Experience
www.classicbikeexperience.com or
call 802-878-5383 www.alton-france.com



SPEEDOMETERS TACHOMETERS & AMP METERS

Repair and sales of vintage gauges for Japanese, British, European & American bikes



Joel Levine Co. Phone: (404) 219-0594
610 S Chattanooga St. Toll Free: (800) 456-6267
Lafayette, GA 30728 E-mail: j14levine@aol.com
www.joellevinecompany.com

FEDERAL IS THE OFFICIAL MOVER OF MOTORCYCLES FOR

MOTORSPORTS

BARBER VINTAGE MUSEUM
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

If the world's largest motorcycle museum trusts Federal to move their motorcycles, shouldn't you?

800-747-4100 ext. 2217 • www.funtransport.com
Get a FREE instant quote today!

STI delivers AMA



CUSTOM
BATES
LEATHERS

Quality for Over 60 Years
The Only Name You Need to Know

Bates Leathers
3671 Industry Ave, Ste C5 • Lakewood, CA 90712
562.426.8668 • fax 562.426.4001
www.batesleathers.com • Made in the USA


RESTORE YOUR **Honda Four** WITH THIS GUIDE

Learn step-by-step how to restore a Honda Four with this **176-page illustrated guide!** In 1969, the Honda Motor Company launched a motorcycle that many consider to be the world's first superbike. The Honda CB750 had the first mass-produced 4-cylinder inline engine, a single overhead camshaft with four carburetors, a 4-into-4 exhaust system, and came with electric start and front disc brakes as standard. This specification set the bar higher than had been seen before on a production motorcycle. Following the success for the original CB750, Honda went on to produce a range of motorcycles using SOHC 4-cylinder engines. All with their own characteristics, they proved to be reliable and smooth-running, and even today they can offer reliable transport on modern roads if restored correctly. Now with some examples more than 40 years old, many enthusiasts wish to restore these classic machines. *How to Restore Honda Fours* has been written to guide the enthusiast through his or her restoration of these fine classic motorcycles.

ENTHUSIAST'S RESTORATION MANUAL™

How to restore
Honda Fours

Covers CB350, 400, 500, 550, 650 & 750 SOHC Fours 1969-1982
YOUR step-by-step colour illustrated guide to complete restoration
Ricky Burns



Motorcycle
CLASSICS

Call 800-880-7567
or visit www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store to order!
Item #7760 | Mention promo code MMCPAJ23

\$49.95
~~\$59.95~~

GAZI
SUSPENSION
QUALITY • PERFORMANCE • INNOVATION

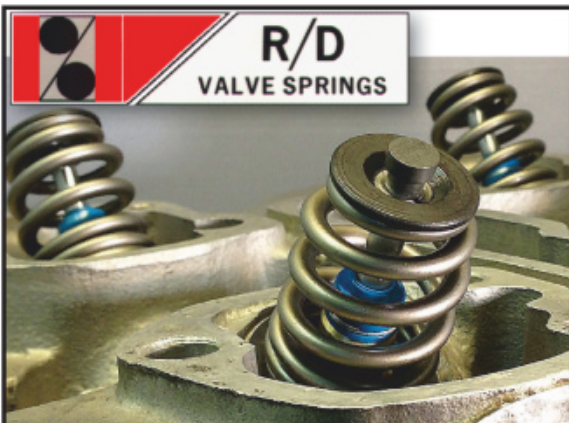
Sport X **GAZI USA**
EPM Performance Imports
732-786-9777
info@gazi-usa.com
www.gazi-usa.com




Klempf's British Parts

High Quality NOS, Used, Reproduction Parts For Vintage

TRIUMPH NORTON BSA
NEW E STORE WITH PICTURES, TECH TIPS, SECURE CHECKOUT!
KLEMPFS.COM
507.374.2222



R/D
VALVE SPRINGS

Increase the performance and life of your vintage engine with the latest in performance beehive valve springs. Take advantage of the light weight of a single valve spring with the performance and control of a dual valve spring. Call or email for applications.
R/D Spring Corp., Email: info@rdvalvespring.com
Call (760) 948-4698 or **Web:** www.rdvalvespring.com

DONELSON CYCLES, INC.

The Motorcycle People

9851 St. Charles Rock Road

St. Ann, MO 63074

Phone: (314) 427-1204

Fax: (314) 427-7642

(800) 325-4144

• Service for
YAMAHA
TRIUMPH
DUCATI
HONDA

• Huge Inventory of Parts
TRIUMPH
BSA
Norton

• Since 1962

• We also have Moto Guzzi parts

• Ship daily via UPS and USPS

Circle #2; see card pg 81

2 STROKE
CRANKSHAFT
 REBUILD
 ROYSRIDES.com
 573 421-2753

SMITHS
 MAGNETIC & CHRONOMETRIC
 INSTRUMENT Repair

INSTRUMENTS RESTORED,
 BOUGHT, SOLD, & REPAIRED

A.J.S.	MATCHLESS
ARIEL	NORTON
BSA	TRIUMPH
DUCATI	VELOCETTE
ENFIELD	VINCENT
GREEVES	& OTHERS
HARLEY	
DAVIDSON	
LAVERDA	

SMITHS

ph. 224-595-2037 or email
 scott@smithsgagerepair.com
 PO BOX 182, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60006-0182

Motorcycle CLASSICS

Ogden Publications, Inc. cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, illustrations or other materials.

Subscriptions: \$29.95 for one year in the United States and its provinces; \$39.95 per year in Canada. Canada Post International Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement No. 40601019. All payment must be made in U.S. funds.

Motorcycle Classics does not recommend, approve or endorse the products and/or services offered by companies advertising in the magazine or on the website.

12v Generators for your Classic Bike!

Upgrade your Vincent, BSA, Triumph, Norton, Velocette, AMC, Matchless today with products by Alton-France.



US Distributor:
 The Classic Bike Experience
 www.classicbikeexperience.com
 www.alton-france.com
 Call 802-878-5383

SIDECARS!

Velorex, Champion,
 Trans-Moto Watsonian

THE WARK SHOP

HOURS: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. EST

(740) 538-4746

www.warkshop.com



Motorcycle Restoration Services
 Belgium, WI
 262-483-5399
 www.retrospeed.net



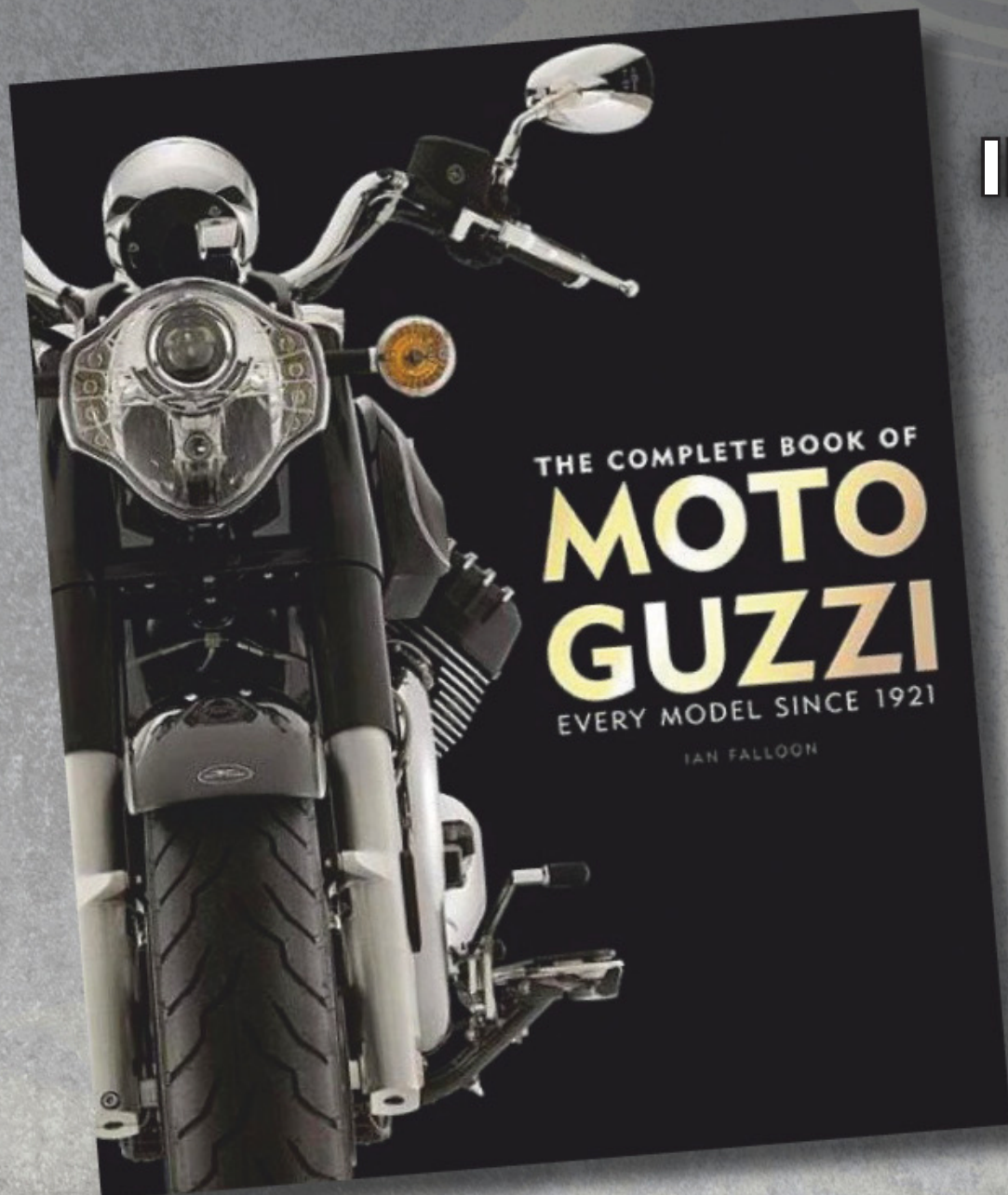

DON'T BE A STRANGER!

Sign up for our
Shop Talk Newsletter
 to receive the latest news from the
 classic motorcycle scene
 and *Motorcycle Classics*.

Sign up Today!

www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Newsletter

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF MOTO GUZZI



IMMERSE YOURSELF
IN THE
HISTORY OF
MOTO GUZZI

\$49.99
~~\$60.00~~

ITEM # 8462

PROMO CODE: MMCPAJZ3

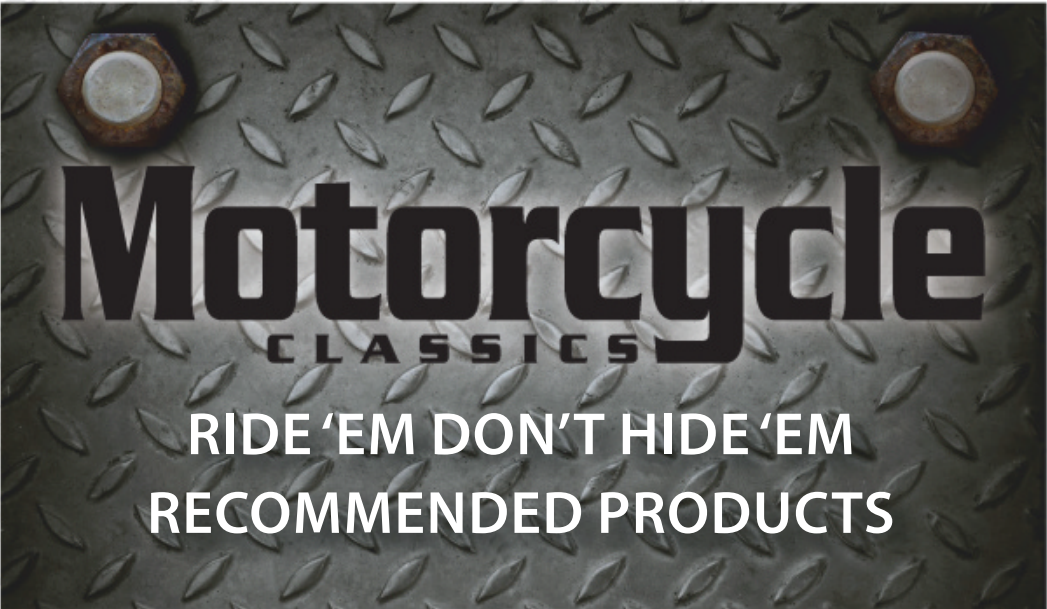
The oldest European motorcycle manufacturer in continuous production, Italy's Moto Guzzi has built some of the most iconic motorcycles ever produced. Established in 1921, the company is one of the most traditional motorcycle makers and also one of the most innovative.

This 256-page, hardcover book is full of beautiful photographs and fascinating details of the long history of Moto Guzzi. The marque has experienced its share of low points as well as high points. Learn all the mesmerizing stories that are bound to come from such a long-standing company with this comprehensive guide.

For the first time ever, *The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi: Every Model Since 1921* collects every iconic motorcycle model in encyclopedia form. Widely respected expert Ian Falloon tells the story of the company, complete with informational charts and glossy images.

Motorcycle
CLASSICS

Call (800) 880-7567 or order online at
www.MotorcycleClassics.com/Store



MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS TUMBLER & ARCHIVE 2017 PACKAGE

Get 13 years of *Motorcycle Classics* articles at your fingertips, plus show the world your favorite magazine with this *Motorcycle Classics* tumbler and archive package! We have compiled 13 years of content, bringing you the most brilliant, unusual and popular motorcycles ever made ... delivered on a flash drive that plugs into a USB port! Use our search function to easily find relevant content. AND upgrade your mug with our matte black insulated tumbler! This 20 oz. tumbler features a double wall that will keep liquid hot for 5 ½ hours and cold for 24 hours.



#8816 ~~\$58.94~~ \$36.99



MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS SHORT-SLEEVE BLACK T-SHIRT

Enjoy our newly-designed black T-shirt, exclusively available through *Motorcycle Classics*! This black short sleeve T-shirt is emblazoned with the *Motorcycles Classics* logo on the front of the shirt and the slogan "Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em" in white and red lettering on the back of the shirt, along with a great-looking bike.

#8933-8936	S-XL	\$15.00	\$14.00
#8937	2XL	\$17.00	\$16.00
#8938	3XL	\$17.00	\$16.00

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS HAT

Great for any classic motorcycle enthusiast! This adjustable baseball-type hat is embroidered with the *Motorcycle Classics* logo. Show off your favorite magazine with this classic black hat.

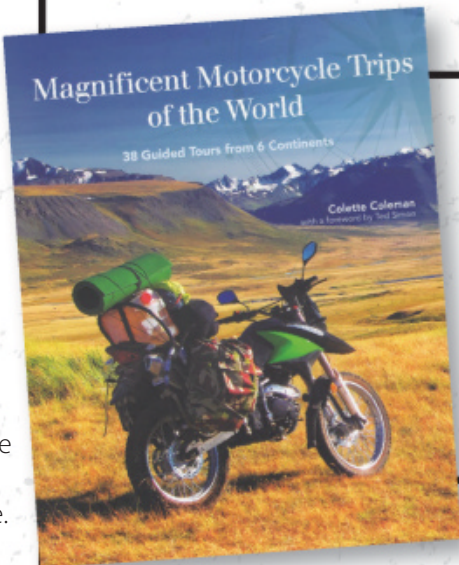
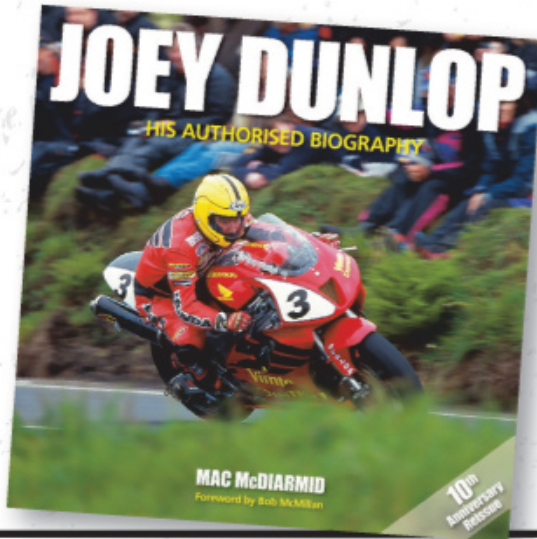
#7657 ~~\$10.00~~ \$8.99



JOEY DUNLOP

This illustrated official biography explores the life of the most successful racing motorcyclist in the 107-year history of the Isle of Man TT races. Joey Dunlop's achievements included three hat tricks at the Isle of Man TT races (1985, 1988, and 2000), where he won a record 26 races in total, as well as 24 wins in the Ulster Grand Prix and 13 in the North West 200 in his native Northern Ireland. For motorcycle fans, Joey Dunlop is still akin to royalty.

#7518 ~~\$44.95~~ \$39.95



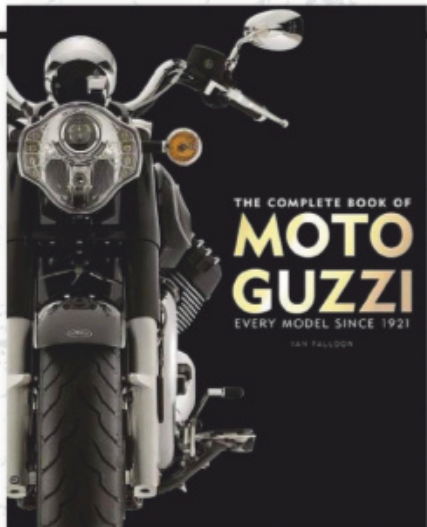
MAGNIFICENT MOTORCYCLE TRIPS OF THE WORLD
Featuring 40 spectacular routes from the snowy passes of Patagonia to Australia's Red Centre, this book is the perfect inspiration for your next big motorcycling adventure. Full of stunning photography and route maps showing points of interest along the way, the guide focuses on journeys that are accessible to everyone.

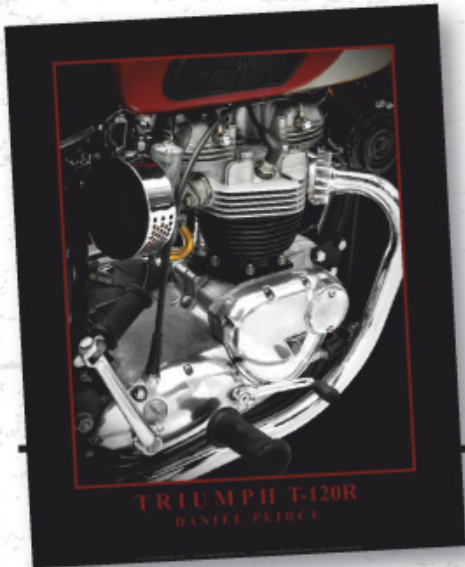
#8865 ~~\$19.99~~ \$17.99

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF MOTO GUZZI

The oldest European motorcycle manufacturer in continuous production, Italy's Moto Guzzi has built some of the most iconic motorcycles ever produced. Established in 1921, the company is one of the most traditional motorcycle makers and also one of the most innovative. For the first time ever, *The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi: Every Model Since 1921* collects all of these iconic motorcycles in encyclopedia form, written by widely respected Moto Guzzi expert Ian Falloon.

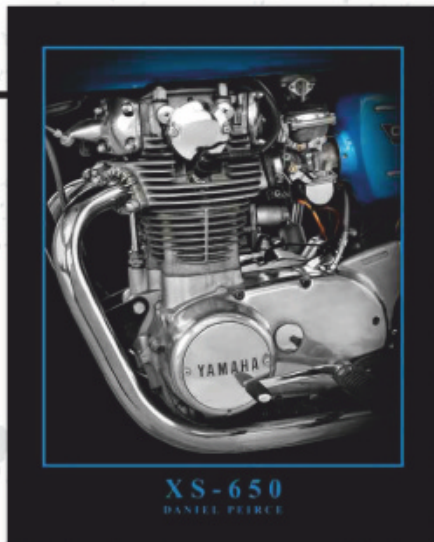
#8462 ~~\$60.00~~ \$49.99





DANIEL PEIRCE TRIUMPH T-120R PRINT
Enjoy the beauty of the Triumph T-120R's engine with Daniel Peirce's metallic print. Photographically printed, the subtle metallic surface produces a depth and color richness in this 16" x 20" is unmatched by any other process. Plus, each print is signed and numbered by Daniel Peirce.

#3808 ~~\$69.00~~ \$62.10



DANIEL PEIRCE XS 650 PRINT

Enjoy the beauty of the XS 650's engine with Daniel Peirce's metallic print. Photographically printed, the subtle metallic surface produces a depth and color richness in this 16" x 20" is unmatched by any other process. Plus, each print is signed and numbered by Daniel Peirce.

#3546 ~~\$69.00~~ \$62.10



BRITISH CUSTOM MOTORCYCLES

This book takes a look at some of the fantastic British motorcycle-based custom bikes around the globe. A celebration of all things "custom Brit," it is the only book devoted entirely to the British custom motorcycle, revealing the innovative, fresh approach to British-based custom bike building.

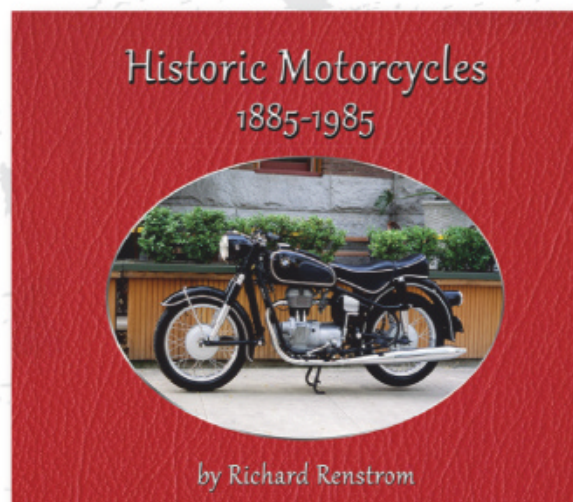
#7405 ~~\$39.95~~ \$36.95

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES

Written by noted motorcycle author Patrick Hahn, *Classic Motorcycles* presents the history of motorcycling as told through the most significant, iconic, classic motorcycles of all time, with both period photography and modern portrait photography. You'll drool over the 1933 Matchless Silver Hawk, and you'll want to tear out the page displaying the 1956 Triumph Thunderbird and frame it. Prepare to be in awe of the undeniable classic motorcycles in this collection.



#8185 ~~\$50.00~~ \$40.00



HISTORIC MOTORCYCLES 1885-1985

Historic Motorcycles 1885-1985 provides the reader with stunning full-color photographs of more than 100 of the world's most beautiful and rare motorcycles. Richard Renstrom, an author of five books and an accomplished photographer,

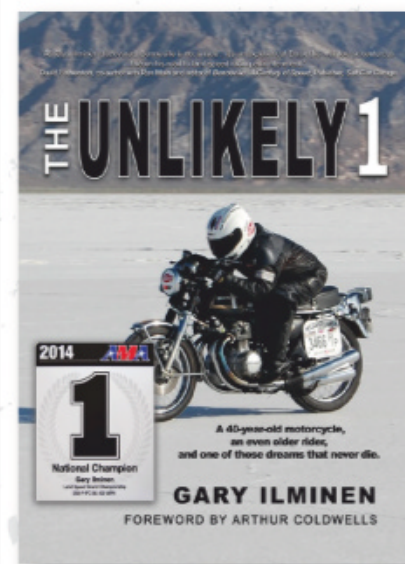
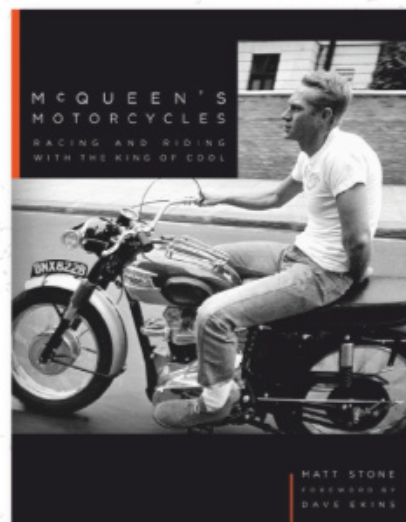
spent more than 50 years accumulating this library of photos of vintage motorcycles from 12 countries (including the United States, England, France, Germany, and Japan). Each photograph is accompanied by a detailed historical essay documenting the origin of each motorcycle as well as the technical specifications that make each machine a true original.

#8079 ~~\$40.00~~ \$34.99

MCQUEEN'S MOTORCYCLES

Even 30 years after his death, Steve McQueen remains a cultural icon. This book focuses on the bikes that the King of Cool raced and collected, from the first Harley McQueen bought when he was an acting student in New York to the Triumph "desert sleds" and Huskys he desert raced all over California, Mexico, and Nevada. *McQueen's Motorcycles* reveals these highly sought-after machines in gorgeous photography and full historical context.

#8184 ~~\$35.00~~ \$29.99



THE UNLIKELY 1

As a teenager, Gary Ilminen read about the motorcycle land speed record-setters that made history on the vast salt flats of Bonneville. After almost four decades came the chance to compete at Bonneville in 2009; three more trips there ensued and in 2014, the dream of setting a national speed record came true!

#8715 ~~\$19.79~~ \$17.99



MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS SHOP TOWEL

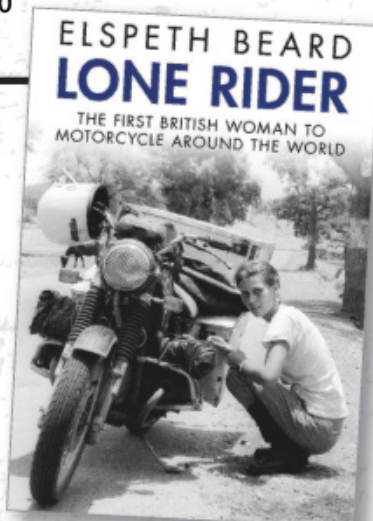
Ideal for any cleaning needs, our industrial-strength shop towels are absorbent and long-lasting. Made from 100 percent cotton, the 14-inch long by 14-inch wide towels are great for use in the garage or on the job for mechanics, autoworkers, or anyone working in an industry where your hands proudly get dirty.

#8747 ~~\$3.00~~ \$2.50

LONE RIDER

In 1982, at the age of 23, Elspeth Beard left her family and friends in London and set off on a 35,000-mile solo adventure around the world on her 1974 BMW R60/6. From riding through deserts and mountain ranges to faking documents and surviving crashes, Beard tells the whole story of her ride with honesty and wit. You don't want to miss this extraordinary and moving story of a unique and life-changing adventure.

#9115 ~~\$19.95~~ \$17.95



To order,
call toll-free
800-880-7567
(outside the United States
and for customer service,
call 785-274-4360),

or go to

MotorcycleClassics.com/RecommendedProducts

Mention code MMCPAJ25.

Promotion Expiration Date: 2/18/19.



STREET BIKES OF THE 60s & 70s PACKAGE

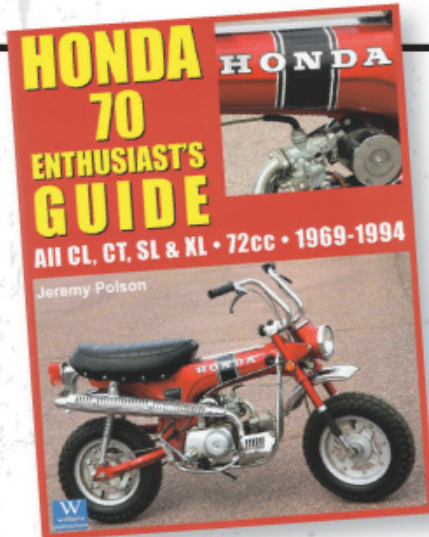
Celebrate the '60s and '70s and the most memorable and unique motorcycles to come out of these decades with this limited-edition package featuring *Motorcycle Classics Street Bikes of the '60s* and *Motorcycle Classics Street Bikes of the '70s*! Each issue is packed with articles full of unique perspectives and photographs that bring each era to life.

#8502 ~~\$13.98~~ \$11.99

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS T-SHIRT

Newly designed and exclusively available through *Motorcycle Classics*, this charcoal T-shirt is soft-hand printed in white lettering with the magazine's logo and slogan, "Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em," emblazoned across the chest. Available in unisex sizes S-2XL.

#8214-8217 S-XL ~~\$15.00~~ \$13.00
#8218 2XL ~~\$17.00~~ \$15.00



HONDA 70 ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE

Author of *Honda Mini Trail: Enthusiast's Guide*, Jeremy Polson has put together another vintage Honda guide. It covers the third-best-selling Honda in American Honda history, the long-running Mini Trail CT-70, along with the CL, SL, and XL 72cc motorcycles manufactured from 1969 to 1994. In addition to the hard facts, this book is filled with many rare photos that track the evolution of Honda's 72cc motorcycles and unravels their mystery.

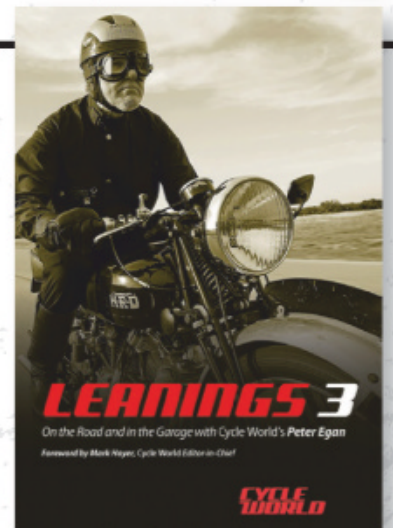
#8777 ~~\$29.95~~ \$27.95

MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS STAINLESS STEEL WATERBOTTLE

Whether you're heading to work or getting ready for a long ride, this *Motorcycle Classics* Stainless Steel Water Bottle will keep your drinks cold for the whole trip! This 17-ounce bottle is double-walled, 18/8 stainless steel with vacuum insulation, and it will keep drinks hot for 12 hours and cold for 48.



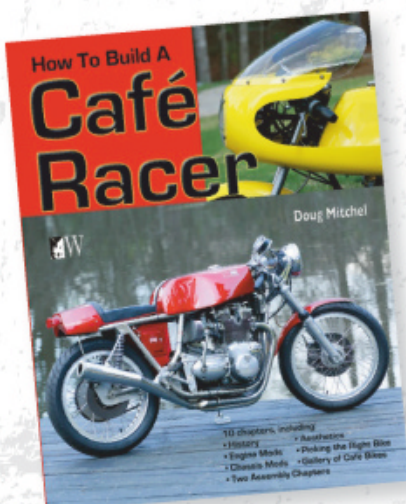
#9116 ~~\$19.99~~ \$17.99



LEANINGS 3

Leanings 3 contains stories and observations from one of America's best motorcycle journalists. Peter Egan's writing invites you to pull up a chair, pour a little scotch, and relax while he shares with you his tales from the road, his motorcycling philosophy, and his keen observations about the two-wheeled life. This is an unforgettable collection of the works of a master writer whose simple adventures of life remind us all why we love to ride.

#7446 ~~\$28.00~~ \$23.99



HOW TO BUILD A CAFÉ RACER

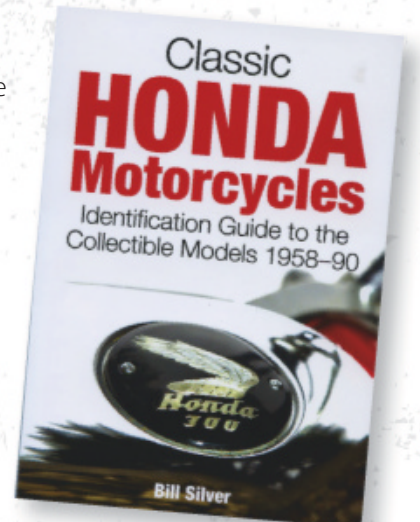
The book starts with chapters on planning and choosing an appropriate bike, followed by chapters that detail the modifications that will likely be embraced by anyone converting a stocker to a rocker. From shocks and tires to engine modifications, Doug Mitchel's book lays out each type of modification and how it's best carried through. The center of the book holds a gallery of finished bikes. The final chapters include two start-to-finish Café builds.

#6684 ~~\$27.95~~ \$23.95

CLASSIC HONDA MOTORCYCLES

Honda made its mark on the motorcycle world with small, affordable bikes, and grew well beyond that to create some of the most important performance machines ever built. Today, these bikes are increasingly coveted by collectors and enthusiasts. This guide to the collectible Hondas gives prospective buyers a leg up on the current market for groundbreaking classics.

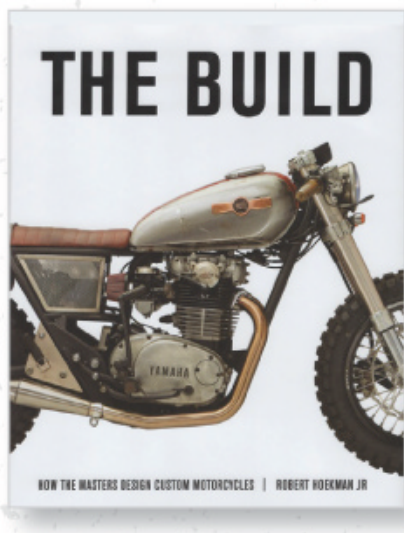
#6428 ~~\$40.00~~ \$34.00



THE BUILD: HOW THE MASTERS DESIGN CUSTOM MOTORCYCLES

In *The Build*, Robert Hoekman Jr. compiles insights from today's best builders to help you plot out your own beautiful beast. This book is as much a 192-page motorcycle art book as it is a blueprint to building the perfect custom bike. The book is the bible of custom motorcycle design, starting with an explanation of all the different bike styles, and then moving into a concise, easy-to-read guide that takes you from finding a donor bike to figuring out how to alter the lines to your liking. The book also covers selecting and building parts, painting and finishing, and what kind of performance modifications might be appropriate.

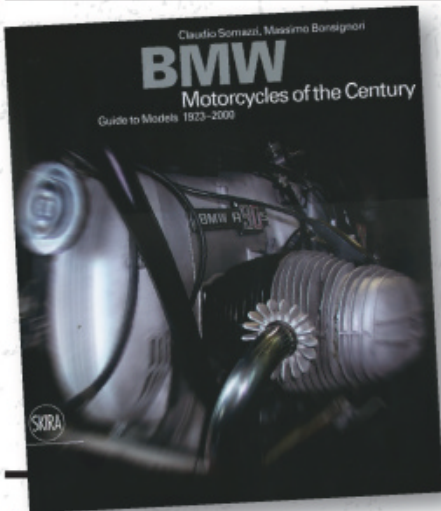
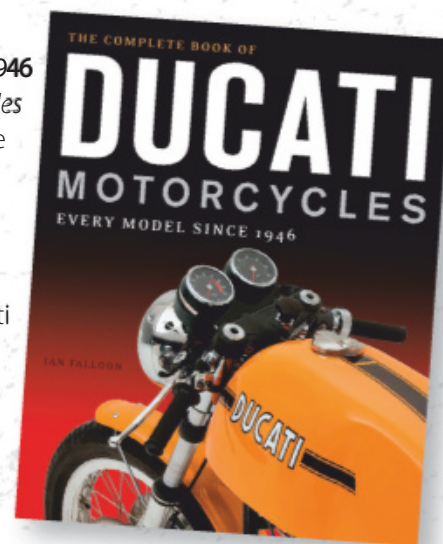
#8053 ~~\$45.00~~ \$38.99



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF DUCATI MOTORCYCLES: EVERY MODEL SINCE 1946

The Complete Book of Ducati Motorcycles traces the stunning chronology of the motorcycles dreamed up by Ducati, from the 1940s to the present day. Laid out for the first time in the form of an encyclopedia, with gorgeous photography and insights from Ducati expert Ian Falloon, this book offers motorcycle enthusiasts a closer look at the craftsmanship, power, and beauty of these extraordinary motorcycles. The book features all of the motorcycles from Ducati's storied history, including the groundbreaking *Desmodromic 750 Super Sport*, the *Mike Hailwood Replica*, the *Superbike-dominating 916*, and the epic *Panigale*.

#8055 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50



BMW: MOTORCYCLES OF THE CENTURY

BMW: Motorcycles of the Century is a reference book written by collectors, for collectors, and serves as an essential guide to estimate and buy vintage motorbikes from this prestigious international brand. With precise images and technical information on every single model produced between 1923 and 2000, this book provides precious advice and suggestions, as well as in-depth analysis of the motorbikes' characteristics.

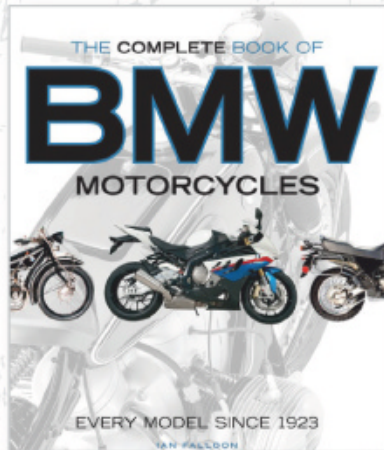
#7188 ~~\$60.00~~ \$49.99



HOW TO RESTORE HONDA CX500 & CX650

You don't need expert knowledge or a fully fitted workshop for a restoration project with *How to Restore Honda CX500 & CX650*. Packed with photographs and detailed instructions, this book is your perfect guide from start to finish.

#7759 ~~\$59.95~~ \$54.95



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF BMW MOTORCYCLES

The Complete Book of BMW Motorcycles is a thorough year-by-year guide to every production machine ever built by Germany's leading motorcycle manufacturer. Get the story behind bikes such as the pre-World War II R5, the military R12, and the K1 "flying brick". This guide captures nearly a century of motorcycling excellence with a combination of historic and contemporary photos.

#7756 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50



CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE RESTORATION

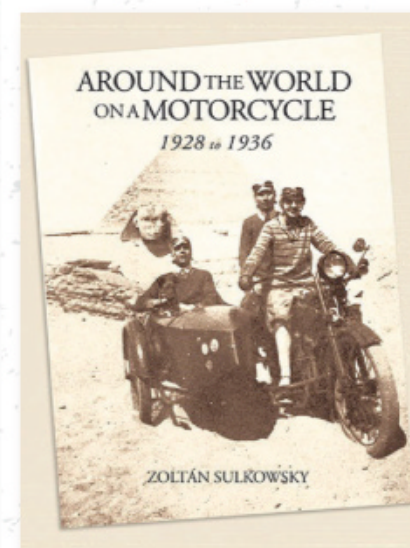
The 1970s and 1980s were wonderful eras for the motorcycle, with their assortment of crazy two-strokes, and the first multi-cylinder Superbikes coming thick and fast from Japan. It was a time of fast-paced engineering advances, and a time in motorcycle history that is unlikely ever to be repeated. Those over-budget motorcycles that we longed for then are now available well within budget ... and just waiting to be restored. Packed full of photographs, and with detailed instructions, this book is the perfect companion for any classic motorcycle restorer.

#7307 ~~\$49.95~~ \$44.95

AROUND THE WORLD ON A MOTORCYCLE

The year was 1928 when two young Hungarians decided to travel around the world on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle with sidecar. This account gives a very clear-eyed view of the world in the 1930s – the two experienced the riches of sultans, witnessed primitive cultures in remote villages, traveled through wilderness, and traversed roads of all descriptions. This intelligent book offers a unique world view between the World Wars, flavored by the great diversity of cultures and the wide variety of human life.

#8347 ~~\$24.95~~ \$21.95



HARLEY-DAVIDSON CVO MOTORCYCLES

Harley-Davidson Custom Vehicle Operations (CVO) motorcycles are the pinnacle of the Motor Company's customization: custom-shop details that push the boundaries of style and performance with high-impact paint, killer wheels, big engines, and exclusive technology. Designed in-house since 1999 at Harley-Davidson's world-class Willie G. Product Development Center, built by the factory, and available through Harley-Davidson's dealer network, these machines set themselves apart from the pack.

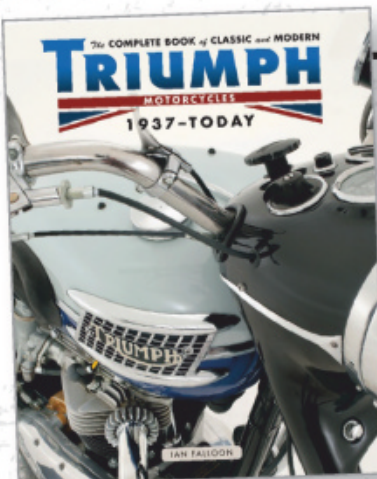
#7924 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF CLASSIC AND MODERN TRIUMPH MOTORCYCLES

Written by respected Triumph expert Ian Falloon, this guide collects all of the motorcycles from this iconic brand in a single volume. All of the major and minor models are covered, with an emphasis on the most exemplary, era-defining motorcycles, such as the *Thunderbird*, *Tiger*, *Trophy*, *Bonneville*, and new machines such as the *Speed Triple*, *ThruXton*, and *Daytona 675*. This is a book no Triumph fan will want to be without!

#7667 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50



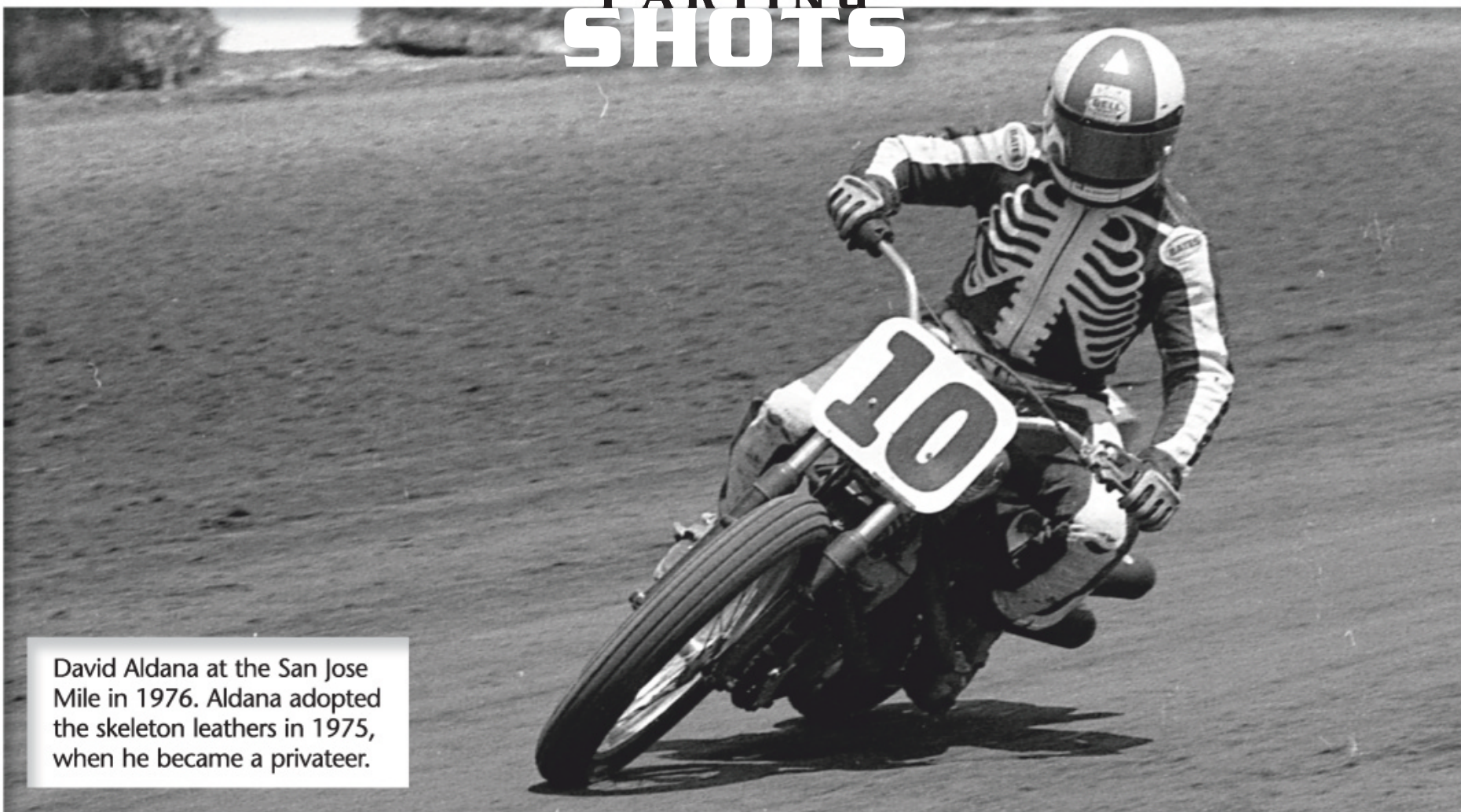
To order,
call toll-free
800-880-7567
(outside the United States
and for customer service,
call 785-274-4360),

or go to

MotorcycleClassics.com/RecommendedProducts

Mention code MMCPAJ25.

Promotion Expiration Date: 2/18/19.



David Aldana at the San Jose Mile in 1976. Aldana adopted the skeleton leathers in 1975, when he became a privateer.

More than skinned-up bones

One of the most prolific and versatile motorcycle racers of all time never won a national championship of consequence. That man is David Aldana, whose professional motorcycle-racing career spanned four decades. Fans of the movie *On Any Sunday* recall Aldana, probably for the first time, when he challenged BSA teammates Dick Mann and Jim Rice and eventual champion Gene Romero for the 1970 AMA Grand National title that served as the movie's common theme thread. Those same movie viewers watched in slack-jawed awe as time and again Aldana walked away from some spectacular crashes.

Crashes and other on-track antics gained Aldana his reputation as a rather flamboyant and colorful character. No matter how spectacular the spill, Aldana seemed invincible, as if he were Gumby and Superman rolled into one, earning him the nickname "Rubber Ball." He walked away from all sorts of crash carnage, prompting people to wonder if his bones were unbreakable. That reputation led to Aldana's all-black leathers featuring the iconic full-body skeleton graphics on the front. The legend of Bones was born.

Aldana was a capable racer in a variety of categories, among them road racing, speedway and motocross. He earned AMA Rookie of the Year honors in 1970, placing third in the Grand National standings, scoring three wins including Talladega (road race), Terre Haute (half-mile) and Indianapolis (mile). He scored a fourth and final AMA National aboard a Norton at the legendary Ascot TT in 1973. In all, Aldana won in four of the AMA's five disciplines, failing

only to win a short track race. Remarkable.

During his first race season as an expert, Aldana, along with his Triumph/BSA teammates Romero and Don Castro, formed the core of what they termed Team Burrito, a tongue-in-cheek nod to their Hispanic roots, not to mention adding welcomed sauce to the sport.



Racing for BSA, a young Aldana strikes a pensive pose in the pits at the 1971 Ontario National road race.

Aldana eventually focused his energy on road racing, riding a Yamaha TZ750 in AMA events during the 1970s. He also represented the United States in the annual Easter Match Series races in England (he was top U.S. scorer in 1975), and in later years he specialized in endurance road racing. His experience made him a natural there, first winning the 1981 Suzuka Eight Hours, co-riding with fellow American Mike Baldwin for Team Honda. Two years later he finished third at the Daytona Superbike race aboard Honda's new VF750 Interceptor (a race he won in 1975 for Yoshimura-Kawasaki), and in 1985 he and future star John Kocinski won the WERA National Endurance Championship riding Cycle Tech Racing's Suzuki GSX-R750.

It was at that juncture in his career that I interviewed Aldana for an article about endurance racing. Naturally enough, our conversation drifted to some of Aldana's more memorable crashes, and he left me

with these words: "It's like a circus act. As you get older, you get more finesse. I still do stupid things, but I've improved the way I do 'em. [But] I still give 'em the old wave [after a crash]." — Dain Gingerelli

ADVENTURE TOGETHER



imz-ural.com

*2018 Gear Up shown in Burgundy Satin. MSRP starting at \$16,499**

**Excludes tax, license, registration, delivery, set-up, and dealer-installed options. Dealer prices may vary.*

HONDA | SUZUKI | YAMAHA | KAWASAKI | TAKEGAWA | KITACO | G-CRAFT | OVERRACING | DAYTONA
VESPA | MOTO GUZZI | APRILIA | DERBI

Some things in
life are not so
hard to get.



MORE THAN 4.100.000 PARTS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR FAVORITE SPARE TIME!
CONVENIENT, RELIABLE & PROFESSIONAL



WWW.CMSNL.COM

PARTS FOR A BETTER RIDE